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BEGUN IN 1858



Ser quam Elegantissimæ Epistolæ.

Three hundred and fifty copies printed.

No.

SEX QUAM ELEGANTISSIMÆ EPISTOLÆ,
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CAXTON IN
1483; REPRODUCED IN FACSIMILE
BY JAMES HYATT, WITH AN INTRO-
DUCTION AND TRANSLATION BY
GEORGE BULLEN, C.B., LL.D.

LONDON:
LAWRENCE & BULLEN,
16, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

1892.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT was an agreeable announcement to bibliographers that was made in the *Times* of the 14th of April, 1890, that the British Museum had acquired for its library an unique Caxton, namely, the "Sex quam elegantissimæ Epistolæ" that passed between Pope Sixtus IV. and the Venetian Republic, with reference to the Duchy of Ferrara, in the year 1482. This work was first discovered in the year 1874 in the Hecht-Heine Library at Halberstadt, bound up in a volume of seventeenth century theological tracts, by Dr. Könnecke, Archivist at Marburg, and was by him described in the *Neuer Anzeiger für Bibliographie* for Oct., 1874. Afterwards it was described by Mr. Blades in the second edition of his "Biography and Typography of William Caxton," London, 1882. Some years ago cautious overtures were made for its sale, at what was thought to be an extravagant price, to the authorities of the British Museum, and the purchase was declined. In 1890, however, it was offered at a considerable reduction of price to Dr. Garnett, Keeper of the Printed Books, who had no hesitation in recommending its purchase to the Trustees, by whom it was acquired for the National Library.

The writer in the *Times* (we presume Dr. Garnett himself) justly remarks of it, "The contents of the book are almost as remarkable as its typographic origin, for it is probably the first publication of diplomatic correspondence in a separate form." Among the works printed by Caxton, as enumerated by Blades, there is nothing at all like it in character. The works printed by Caxton were for the most part romances of chivalry, history, poetry, religious works (such as Psalters, Commemorations and Directories for the Clergy), the "Golden Legend," the "Art and Craft to Die well," and the "Vitas Patrum"; also moral works and school-books, such as the "Parvus" and "Magnus Catho," "Caton" in English, translated by Caxton himself, "oute of frensshe into Englysshe," and the Fables of Æsop and others, likewise translated by him from the French.

Caxton, in fact, was in some instances either author or translator, besides being printer of the works set forth by him. For all such works as those here mentioned it is easy to see that there would be a great demand; but what could have been his inducement to publish a work like this, giving the text of a diplomatic correspondence between Pope Sixtus IV. and the Republic of Venice, relating to a dispute between them on the affairs of the Duchy of Ravenna, is at first sight rather perplexing. Caxton was a thorough business man, and he could scarcely have looked for a large number of readers for so unpromising a publication, printed in Latin, on a subject apparently of

little interest to English people. But Caxton himself may have been attracted by it. For many years, as Governor of the English Merchant Adventurers at Bruges, he had been mixed up with trade treaties and arbitrations; and later, when in the service of the Duchess of Burgundy, Edward IV.'s sister, he had acquired a knowledge of Court affairs, that made him take a wider outlook on foreign policy and the sayings and doings of foreign Princes. He certainly must have felt a deep interest in the works and ways of the Venetian Republic, that greatest centre of European commerce, and the chief bulwark of Christendom against the power of the Turks. Add to this that Petrus Carmelianus, by whom these Epistles were *diligently amended*—it may be presumed as they passed through the press—was the person in all likelihood who introduced them to Caxton's notice, and recommended their being printed. Now, Carmelianus was a man of considerable influence, a literary man, a poet, and a Church dignitary. With such backing up a certain number of copies would no doubt find purchasers; and for the rest Caxton was not a poor man, and could afford the venture.

Carmelianus, an Italian, would naturally be excited by the dispute between the Pope and the Venetians. Born at Brescia about the middle of the fifteenth century, he appears to have come to England some time during the reign of King Edward IV., and to have made it his home until his death in 1527. He wrote a poem on St. Mary in Egypt, in Richard III.'s time, which

he dedicated to Sir R. Brackenbury, and in his dedicatory epistle he praises Richard III. as a model king, a pattern of piety, justice, and sagacity. * Afterwards, however, in Henry VII.'s time, in a poem to celebrate the birth of Prince Arthur, he unsays all this, and represents Richard as a monster of cruelty and vice. Being in Holy Orders, he became successively Rector of St. George's, Southwark, Prebend of York, Archdeacon of Gloucester, and Prebend of London. Henry VII. made him his Latin Secretary, and in Henry VIII.'s time, in 1522, he was so rich that he was assessed in the sum of £333 6s. towards carrying on the war with France. His title of "Poeta Laureatus" was perhaps only self-bestowed.

Of the causes that led to the war between the Pope and the Venetians on the one side, and the Duke of Ferrara, aided by the King of Naples, the Duke of Milan, and the Florentines on the other, it is not necessary to speak here at large. It originated mainly in the Pope's excessive Nepotism, that glaring blot on so many of the Sovereign Pontiffs.

Sixtus IV., Francesco de la Rovere, was not one of the good Popes; indeed, he was one of the very worst. Elected to the Chair of St. Peter in Aug., 1471, an election which, according to Sismondi, was brought about by the most corrupt means, he lavished upon his four nephews the vast treasures accumulated by the late Pope Paul II., and he and they led a life of debauchery and extravagance. Only a few months after his election he raised one of these

nephews, Pietro Riario, to the rank of Cardinal when only twenty-six years old, to the scandal of the entire Court and city. This young man distinguished himself only by his pomp and luxury, and died of his excesses and debaucheries in 1474. His next favourite was his nephew, Giovanni de la Rovere, and his next was Giuliano de la Rovere, afterwards Cardinal and Pope, who at an early age developed the most warlike tendencies. A fourth nephew was Girolamo Riario, a layman, Count of Imola and Forli, and all-powerful at Rome. Sixtus IV. himself always seemed to take a pleasure in embroiling the several States of Italy among themselves, sometimes taking sides with one and sometimes with another. In 1478 he issued a Bull against the Republic of Florence, and proclaimed war against it. The Florentines took for their Commander-in-Chief Hercules d'Este, Duke of Ferrara. In 1476-78 he intrigued with the Swiss and brought them into conflict with the Milanese. In 1480, when the Turks appeared in Italy, he became alarmed, and called upon all the Christian Princes, and especially those of Italy, to lay aside all animosities, and unite against the common enemies of Christendom. He became reconciled in the same year to the Florentines.

In 1481 Pope Sixtus sent his nephew Girolamo Riario, Lord of Forli and Imola, to Venice to form an alliance between that Republic and the Holy See. Riario conceived the project of partitioning the dominions of Ferrara between himself and the Venetian Republic. With this object, in

May, 1482, the Pope and the Republic declared war against the Duke of Ferrara, Robert Malatesta being Commander-in-Chief for the Pope, and Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino, for the Duke of Ferrara. During the year 1482 several actions were fought, but with doubtful results to either side, until by a victory gained by Malatesta at Campo Morto the Pope and the Venetians obtained a decided advantage.

The Venetians now thought to gather for themselves some of the spoils of war, but they were miserably disappointed ; for, on the 14th Oct., the Pope sent an envoy to Naples to treat with King Ferdinand respecting a truce. This was agreed to in November, and in the following month peace was declared between the Pope and the Duke of Ferrara and his allies ; the Duke being granted the possession of his states, besides other advantages ; and the Venetians being allowed thirty days to make up their minds as to their acquiescence or otherwise in these arrangements. The Venetians were naturally indignant at this treatment, and the Pope wrote in vain to the Doge Mocenigo to persuade him to agree to the pacification.

This letter, dated 11th Dec., 1482, was the first of the "*Sex quam elegantissimæ Epistolæ*," so called, printed in this publication of Caxton, and was followed on the 16th Dec. by a letter from the College of Cardinals in support of the Pope's recommendation. The Venetians replied in a long letter to the Pope on the 7th Jan., 1483, and on the same day in a short one to the College

of Cardinals. In Feb., 1483 (17th Calen. Martii, 1482), the Pope wrote a second and very long letter to the Venetians, urging the pacification upon them under the heaviest penalties secular and ecclesiastical; and to this the Venetians replied in respectful but decided terms, declining the Pope's recommendation. To this letter there has been no date affixed. The Pope now appealed to the Princes of Europe, complaining of the obstinacy of his late allies, and finally on the 25th of May, 1483, he excommunicated the chiefs of the Republic, and placed the entire State of Venice under an interdict. This was not, however, much regarded either by the ecclesiastics of Venice or the Signoria, the latter of whom appealed to a General Council. Eventually peace was concluded between all the belligerents on the 7th Aug., 1484, and on the 13th of the same month Pope Sixtus IV. himself died, aged seventy years.

The brief introduction by Carmelianus (if it was indeed written by him) seems to favour the side of the Venetians in the quarrel. The designation of "*quam elegantissimæ*" given to the six epistles in the colophon will not be endorsed by Latin scholars of the present age.

It should be noticed that the first, third, and fourth of these letters have been recently published. They were inserted in the History of his own Times (1475-1510) by Sigismondo dei Conti, Secretary to Popes Sixtus IV. and Julius II., for whom Raphael painted the famous Madonna di Foligno. This history is a work of great merit, which

nevertheless, though its publication was frequently undertaken, remained inedited until 1883, when it was printed at Rome at the expense of the Italian Government. Conti, who had in all probability drafted the first letters of the Pope and Cardinals himself, was commissioned to bear them in person to Venice, "*non ob facundiam, sed, credo, ob mite et mansuetum ingenium.*" He met with the coldest reception. "*Neque notum neque ignotum inveni quemquam, qui me alloqui auderet. Pontifex ex socio et amico repente hostis factus, in magno apud omnes odio versabatur.*" He fulfilled his commission nevertheless, and returned bringing the replies of the Venetians to the Pope and Cardinals, being the third and fourth of the letters printed by Caxton. The discrepancies, however, between Caxton's text and Conti's seem at first sight very extraordinary. The first letter, from Sixtus to the Venetians, is the only one where the texts precisely agree. The second, from the Cardinals, has, after the formal address, hardly a word in common in the two versions. The purport is the same, the diction differs entirely. The third and fourth, from the Venetians to the Pope and Cardinals, agree in substance, but present numerous verbal discrepancies. This, nevertheless, admits of a simple explanation, which leaves no ground for impeaching the genuineness of Caxton's text. Upon careful examination it will appear that Conti's variations are almost invariably improvements in the point of Latinity, and the inference is irresistible that the Latin of the Venetian secretary was

not good enough for him, and that, when he came to insert the letters in his History, he took the liberty of bringing them up to his own standard. For example, at the end of the Venetians' letter to the Pope, where the genuine text reads "*Haud sperare non possumus foelicem exitum,*" Conti gets rid of the awkward double negative by writing "*Non possumus sperare nisi,*" etc., and observing that the last three words of the epistle, "*Moverit, impulerit, concitaverit,*" repeat the same thing three times over, he substitutes the effective climax, "*Consenserit, suaserit, concitârit.*" The absence of alterations in the Pope's letter is easily explained on the theory that it was drafted by Conti himself, while it must be supposed that the epistle from the Cardinals was missing when he wrote, and that he composed another to supply its place.

The work is on twenty-four leaves, with signatures, but without title-page or numeration of the leaves, and is printed from types No. 4 and 4* according to Blades's classification. After the colophon and the verses mentioned above, there occurs an "*Interpretacio magnarum litterarum punctuatarum, parvarumque,*" occupying part of the recto and the entire verso of the last leaf.

And now the question arises, Did Caxton print these letters from MS. sources, or from a previously printed edition brought into England out of Italy? The latter would appear to be by far the more probable conclusion, especially since it is known from Hain, "*Repertorium Bibliographicum,*" No. 14,801, that the

second letter of the Pope to the Venetians, forming the fifth in this collection, was separately printed (probably at Rome). Dr. Könnecke is in favour of this view. Perhaps a copy of the six letters printed together with the Introduction may yet be discovered, proving that Caxton merely reprinted.

The fac-simile in photo-lithography of this rare Caxton has been admirably executed by Mr. James Hyatt.

¶ Eracles dux Ferrarie in eo ducatu
Venetorum armis constitutus paulopost
vetustissimas eorum violat immunitates/
init foedus cum Othherdinando Rege Nea-
politano Mediolanensium duce / et floren-
tinorum repu/ quod per Veneta foedera nō
licebat/Venetis propria reposcunt/ille ter-
guiversari/Xystus pontifex quartus/relictis
Othherdinandi foedere Venetis adheret/Indis-
gnatus Othherdinandus auertendi pontificis
causa eum iniurijs laceffit/Pontifex hor-
tatur Venetos ut Ferrariensi bellum in-
ferant/inferunt/et pado terraq; exagitant/
Othherdinandus acrioribus remedijs agen-
dum ratus dat operam/ut Alphonsus filius
us Calabrie dux fines Romanos bello ter-
et/Xystus auxilium a Venetis petit/et ter-
restre et maritimum / Transmittunt classē
validam / et praeterea quandam pecuniam ad
equites peditesq; / pontifex quāuis / si velit/
longe superior viribus sit/petit tamen a Ve-
netis Robertū malatestam belli ducem/je-
cum mille quingētis equitibus/relicto fer-
rariensi bello pontifici in auxilium aduolat
classis totā orā maritimā regni populatur

Dux Venetorum Robertus Mala/Calabrie ducem cum omnibus regis copiis proflagat/Deus iis Rome triumphus actus/pontificis Victorie penitet quam prosequi haud sustinet ulterius/ne duplici Veneti incrementant gloria/et profligati regis/et devicti Ferrarie/statim inter eum regis qz federatos de pace ac federe agi ceptum /Orbem Veneti quam maxime possunt urgent captis circa omnibus fere oppidis cingunt obsidione/Pontifex non solum pacem cum eorum hostibus init/sed novum etiam fedus/Et legatum cum copiis auxilio Ferrariensi mittit/quibus praest dux Calabriae ante proflagatus / qui secum quingentos turcos in bellum ducit/Interea Pontifex Venetis scribit/hortatur ad pacem totius Italiae/Deponant arma/capta restituat/Ferrariam obsidione solvant/in eadem fere sententiam scribit Collegium Cardinalium/Venetis et pro dignitate pontificia/et pro indignitate Violati federis negotium respondendi dant Bernardo Justiniano Mili/Orato/Procuratore S/Mar / qui et quia eloquentissimus sapientissimusqz et qd princeps senatus tunc

gereret maxime ydoneus ad id ab om-
nibus est iudicatus

Dilecto filio nobili Viro Joanni Mocen-
go Duca Venetiarum/et cetera

Sixtus Papa quartus

Dilecte fili salut/et apostolicę benedi/Cor
primū ad apicem sūmi apostolatus diui-
na ita disponēte clemēcia meritis licet in-
sufficiētibz fuimus euecti/Nilhil presteas
bilioz duxim9 quā ōni cura/ōni ingenio
et industria procurare ea que pacis essent/
Tūq nihil magis officio nro cōuenire ar-
bitramur qui regis pacifica Vicem gerere-
m9/Tū q reipu/christiane a crudelissimis
barbaris violēter impetite maximisqz et di-
uturnis cladibus afflicte nihil salutarē
videbamus/Hoc incēsi studio nō solū Ital-
liā accersistis ad nos sepius potentatū
oratoribus ad mutuā aiōrū cōiunctionē ex-
citauimus / sed etiā trāsalpinos principes
et remotissimas nationes / missis ad id
legatis et nunchis noscitis monuimus et
iterum atqz iterum sumus obsecrati/ Qd
si aliquando aliquorum iniuria impulit/

a iij

Ut preter institutum nostrum arma sumes-
rimus non nisi inuicti et lassati Vbi spi-
ritualia non profecissent / Id fecimus /
Et pro libertatis ecclesiasticæ cōseruaciōe /
pro qua si opus sit vitam effūdere debem⁹ /
Atque hoc quidem eo consilio gestum est /
Ut rebus bello compositis pax optata seq̃-
retur / quā semper aīo nostro proposuim⁹ / in s-
tīmo affectu cōcupiuim⁹ / Cum autem pre-
ter huiusmodi desyderium nostrū superioris
suis mensibus italia / ita cooperante huma-
ne pacis inimico in periculosum et graue
bellum inciderit eoq̃ processerit furor belli i-
tus / Ut nos quoq̃ merito causa tua lacer-
fili pluribus damnis et incommodis affec-
ti fuerimus / plerasq̃ ciuitates nostras et
oppida amiserimus / Urbem Romā bōsidio
cinctā viderimus / Agrum fere totum depō-
pulatū / Ciues ad sedicionem aduersus
nos illigatos Littora nostra infesta classe
exagitata / interclusam comeatibus ciuitas
tem / prohibitis transitu eos qui Romam
ex omni orbis terrarum natione accē-
dere consueuerunt / quo Romana ci-
uitas dissolueretur / Interceptos tam

Vener/ fratrum nostrorum / S / R / E / car:
dinalium quā aliorū prelatorū ecclesiasti &
cos prouēt9 / Domicellos plerosqz nostros
apta rebellionē hostilia omnia in nos ppe &
traxe / Ferrariam isignē ecclesie ciuitatē in
manifesto periculo cōstitutā / Vniuersā ita &
liā intestio interse bello cōflagrātē atqz hec
oīa charissimi in cristo filij nostri Ferd/et
Helisabeth sapientissimi ac pientissimi cas
tella reges considerantes atqz metientes /
quā luctuose rebus Christianis quā pnic:
ose apostolicē sedi / quā periculose fidei ca:
tholice essent huiusmodi perturbationes /
pp scisma quod in ecclesia dei a non nul:
lis iam procurabatur / pio zelo ducti vni:
uersalis concordie miserint ad nos humi:
liter pro pace supplicatum / Idem Venere ipsi
fratres nostri / Idem Po / Ro / Idem alie
ecclesiastice ciuitates / Idem reliqui italie
potentatus summis precib9 postulauerit /
rogauerintqz / Duximus eorum honestis
simo desiderio annuendum / precipue cum
ad prisum institutum et naturam nostrā
pacande conseruandeqz pacis hoc accedat /
Atqz in ea inaderim9 tēpora ī qib9 magis

expetendum/ nihil magis necessarium sit
quam Italiam inter se consentientem ha-
ber/ ab armis discordare/ capta hinc inde res-
tituere/ odia et similitates deponere/ in mu-
tua tranquillitate conquiescere/ Si. Bre
Christiani esse volumus/ Si libertatem/ si
fortunas nostras/ si dei cultum/ et religio-
nem/ qua nihil nobis cari⁹ esse debet ad-
uersus imanissimam turcorum gentem ex-
cidio Italie imminentem tueri et protegere
re desideramus/ Quamobrem cum persua-
deamus nobis/ et te/ et inclitam tempu/ tu-
am ab hoc communi bono non abhorreere /
Quippe que omni tempore pacem dilexerit
et omnes discordiarum causas de medio
tollere studuerit/ Hortamur te paterno af-
fectu/ Et postquam reliqui omnes in mu-
tua quiete nobiscum coniungi cupiunt / et
postulant / Velis et tu ad hanc sanctam et
optabilem Unitatem accedere/ ab armis dis-
cordare/ capta restituere/ res ferrarienses omit-
tere/ neq; amplius bello et obsidione ciui-
tatem istam nostram trahere/ Quod profec-
to non solum summa sapientia tua dignu
erit/ Qui considerare potes/ quo in discris-

mine Italia omnis versetur / sed ita tibi
erit honorificū et gloriosū / Ut mortale lau
dē apud oēs sis cōsecutur⁹ / siqdem offeris
m⁹ / nos exallēcie tue in iusticia prōptē et
expeditē nō defuturos si qd habes qd de de
ce illo conqueraris / Datum Rome apud
sanctum Petrum sub annulo piscatoris die
vi Decembris. / M/EEEE/xxxi/pons/
nostri. / anno vii

R Griefus

Illusterrimo principi D/ S/ Mocenigo
Duci Venetiarū dignissimo amico nostro
carissimo

Episcopi Presbiteri Diaconi / S/R/E/
Car/

m Disemacione diuina / Episcopi presbiteri /
Dia/ S/R/E/car/ Illu princi
pi domino duci Venetiarum post sincerā
in domino charitatem / Quātū sanctiss/ Do
M/ Nosqz pacem et quietem italie semper

non solum dilexerimus / Verum etiam oī
cura industria / studioq; procurauerimus
multis euidentissimis documētis que sua
sanctitas sapienter vtrq; scribit infimis
quibusq; nedū sapiētib; Viris arbitramur
liquere / Sed illo p̄cipue q̄ superioribus
ānis sua sanctitas ac nos quietis italie aui
diffimi qualemcūq; pacem bello quo tū
lōge superior erat ecclesia / p̄ferre maluis
mus / Quod quidem eo magis ferimus q̄
Vltra solūtatem et propositū sue b̄itudis
et nostrū / Excellen / O / id maxime cupiētē
Videamus / Quis igitur / S / suā nosq; nō
sūmopere laudauerit / Si perseverantes in
īstituto nostrō laudabili quietis italie q;
parande cōseruādeq; / cum presenti hoc et pe
riculoso bello quo ea que sua sanctitas recē
set dāna et icōmoda sedi apostolice ac S R
Ec / merito vestrē cels / causa illata fuisse /
pacem et cōcordiā vniuersalem / ita magis
me suadentibus et supplicantibus per ora
tores suos ad id missos Ser / Hispanie
Rege ac Regina et vniuersa prope I
talia commutauimus / Profecto nemo
nisi ipsius pacis ac Religionis Chris

tiane turbator / Que omnia sua Sancti s
tas nosq; eo libencius fecimus quo sicuti
superiore bello ad pacem erat / Ita nunc / O /
cel / ad communem mutuãq; cõcordiã ad
restituẽda ablata sicuti ceteri Italie potentia
tus faciũt ad deponenda odia et simulta s
tes propensam esse facile credidimus / Nos
tamuz igitur quãto maxime possumus af
fectu O / Exzellen / que sēper discordiarũ se
mina erueret consuevit / Et quẽadmodũ reli
qui Italie principat9 fecere / Velit et ipsa ad
hãc cõmunẽ et opportunã ad reprimẽdos in
fringendosq; hostiũ fidei catholice / conatus /
concordiã accedere / Arma deponere / Ferras
riaq; Vrbe ecclesie tam insigni obsidionem
amouere / Quod si / O / cel / Et pro sua sin
gulari iusticia sapientiaq; confidimus et
optamus epeuacioni mandauerit / Oñiãtati
exipit / christiane et que uunc in maximo pe
riculo versatur totius Italie quieti consulat /
cunctas supersticiones cupiditatis dominãdi
tolleas ac deniq; apud omnes laudem
et gloriã inmortalem consequetur /
Præterea Et sua Beatitudo scribit / Si
quid est quod de Duce illo conquere

possit/O/et/præter ratū sumi Pon/Judiz
aum qd sibi minime defuturū ē/opera nos
tram nos quoq; præstaturos possimur /
Bene valeat epel/O/ Datum Rome die
xvi/mensis decembris/Anno a natiuitate
Do/m CCCCLxxxvii/Sub signetis nostro
rum trium in ordine priorum

Sigto Quarto/Pont/Mag/

a Capimus breue/S/O/qua deuit e
semper cōsueuim⁹ reuerencia et deuot
ione/ interRegimus ex eo causas que eam
videntur impulisse ad foedus nostrū deser
rendum et insinuandum sese paci foederiq;
communiū hostiū / Hortatur præterea nos
paterno affectu et pluribus verbis huma
nissimis ad pacem cum ceteris italie po
tentatib⁹ ineundā / abstinendūq; deinceps
ab Ferrariensi bello / Enimuero/S/O/
quantum attinet ad pacem et foedus cum
communibus hostibus initum / Dixi
mus iam antea que sentiemus per

oratore nostrum/ Repetere ea impresens
artu opere precium non videtur/ quandoquid
dem ita faciendū iudicauit/ S. Co/ cui iura
omnia diuina/ humanaq; pro sua summa
sapientia et incomparabili doctrina notissis
ma sunt/ Vtinā vestre Q/ et illi sanctissime
sedi ita conducant/ Illud tamē profari
horat eam rem nobis nō mediocri molestie
futuram fuisse nisi deus institutum erga
superiores omnes sacros ponti/ et principue
S/ Co/ admonuisset/ equo animo ferre quic
quid illis collibuisse decernere/ rescindere/ fa
cere/ atq; eadē p infectis habere Et nisi pre
terea nobis spes esset deū ipsū supremū iu
dicem verū humanarū sicuti equis oculis
hęc ipsa conspiciere/ Ita nos potencie equi s
tatūq; sue brachio hac tempestate non deser
turum presertim qui nos in difficilioribus
longe temporibus haud deseruit/ Hortatus
vestri beatissime pater ad pacem pleni bo
nitatis et sapientie/ sunt illi quidem digni
pontificis et cōmū omnium parente/ Si ta
men/ filios/ n/ cum parētē tā libere quā de
re loqui deat/ in tēpore optimo actionū hu
manarū iudice adhibeantur/ Nam illud

primum profiteri non Verebimur pacem
nos parantesq; nostros ita semper coluit
se/ Ut nunquam nisi summis iniurijs laes
siti/ aut pro sociali seruanda fide quam nos
tris periculis semper antetulimus ad ar
ma ierimus/ Neq; hostem duximus Brū
hoc tēpore prater ferrariensem foederum Dīo
latorem/ Non recitabimus eius ingratitū
binem pro beneficijs innumeris tam erga
maiores suos quam in ipsum collatis/ quē
nostris opib; pecunijs/ in eo collocauimus
ducatu/ Et quidnā Unquā pro tantis erga
se meritis gratie retulit/ Sit hoc insatis
hominis humana Dnā iura contemnentis
Sed quod sit ausus mox post ducatu ini
tū qd; nullus Unquā suorum progenitorū au
sus est iura nostra ferrariensia infringere
ciues Venetos Regare/ exstinguere magistera
tum/ In Venetos deniq; fines/ atque adeo
in ducatum ipsum erumpere/ Monitus sit
paternis Verbis per quinq; et āplius an
nos Ut resipiscat/ Hec si patientiam nostrā
ne dicamus mollitiē aīni & quasi ignauā
quādā nō attestātur/ perierint sane equa
Dnā iudicia/ Testis ē beatitudo Brā ad quā
iam annum Vercentem iniurias istas

de tulimus / Meminisse potest quā indigēda
Dise sunt / que haud ferendaes ensuerit / in
flāmarū etiā ad ulas tendas / Imprimis
aut ad armis persequēdos hostes / Quē
Ferrariensi foederatos / terra maris / Quāta
igitur fide / studio animi magnitudine bel
lū suscepimus pro dignitate cōmodisq
Refris / et illius sacro sancto sedis / Omittū
mus auxiliares copias equitū peditūq
quotquot petite sunt nostris istis sumptibz
Liberarissime paratas / s; classis potissimū
illa validissima trēmū naviūqz ferme ec
troginta milite equitibus instructa q totā
orā ab aprucio brūdusū usqz excurrens /
ferro igniqz omnia rāsādo depopulata est
Victoria deinde nobilissima a Roberto maz
lesta dux nostro apud neptunū cāpanie
de Refris hostibus relata / nomini Refro cōs
secrata monumētis eternis pro testimonio
celebratur / Quid illud / qd Robertum desez
ere Ferrariam / qd nunquam creditum ē
maluimus / e cum omnibz eius cepis cū
to agmitue quanta potuit pernicitate in hos
tem Refrum ferri ultra campaniam / quasi
inmemores totius Placie Dires contra

nos in unum coactas clarissimumque
belli Duxm Federicum Urbinate[m] cas-
tra castris nostris contulisse / Affuit des-
ue pio ardori nostro / Hostis a duce nos-
tro fusus fugatusque / Liberata Urbs com-
meatus aperti / Triumphus actus in hono-
rem / G / G / Longissimo captiuorum proce-
rum ordine / Quo nullum letiorem clarios
etiam multa retro secula vidit Urbs Ro-
ma / quod si perfecti Veneri serio bellum geres-
se q̄ loco maluissent / Et prosequi Victor-
am diuinitus collatam hostis captiuus in
ditionem Veniebat Veneram / confectumque es-
set bellum maiori cum gloria / quam Vlli
Vnquam Romano pontifici contigisset /
Nos tamen interea paucos post dies im-
matura Roberti morte q̄ certe non debuit
clarissimum ducem amisimus maxima do-
minij nostri iactura / haud quaquam credere
possumus Pater sancte federa ista noua
tam alte animo Vestro insedisse / Et hec of-
ficia et benemerita tantis cum impensis et
periculis nostris obita / et illorum actus ins-
urias / quibus nihil intentatum in nos
reliquere omnino ex animo deleueris /

Quam benigno autem animo tum cum da
batur in duam Ferrariensem existerimus /
Declarant littere nostrae ad Reseram beati /
tudinem / parati semper fuimus ad eum in
gratiam recipiendum modo nobis ipse Reser
ta nostrae iura dignitatesque exceptas restitu
eret / Dissenserit ne / an obstinatio sit fac
tus / cui notius quam / B / O / cui Reser dedit
ipse eiusque socij / Dum querunt frivolis ca
uillationibus rem trahere / Huc adeo ut in
quam posthac Resera sanctitas dignum ex
suerit de cuius pace Veniaque Verbu ad nos
faceret / Sumptum igitur bellum est / quod
quidem omnipotens et iustissimus deus
iustitiae nostrae bene conscius summis Vbiq
favoribus est prosecutus / sed plura de Ro
punitate nostrae rectitudineque animi qua
necesse est / Vel quia tractata manibus / S
O / omnia sunt / Vel quia perspicua iam fac
ta non Italici modo / sed experis etiam na
tionibus / Quod autem / B / O / hortamini
nos ad pacem impresencia / cum iam ad fis
nem pene belli sit Ventum / Stinam id ingra
tiam B Reser facere liceret ea cum digni
tate et status nostri incolumitate qua

inuito nō solum soluiimus / sed maxime es-
tiam concupiuiimus / Verum dignetur pro
equitate / pro bonitate / pro Iusticia denique
sua non ad id tantum quod optant alij / quā
ad ea etiam animaduertere que Iusticie
sint consentanea / Nam si ante bellum ex-
ortum hec ad pacem efficacem emanasset inui-
tatio / facile quidvis exstitisset / parum ne-
gocij fuisset integra re deducere nos ad ob-
liuionē iniuriarū illatorum poenitentē / quas
diuina lege et instituto maiorū nostro quod
facile semper potuimus ex animo delere /
Sed post absumptam tantam vim auri /
quā tantā nec ipsa valet Ferraria / quant-
umuis insignis habeatur post innumera-
biles eosdemque prestantissimos ciues amis-
sos / hostē pertinacissimū obsessū moenibus
Quid aliud est hortari nos ad pacem / nisi
si exorta nobis de manibus ipsa victoria
derisui nostrum dominiū ad libidinem hosti-
um totū mūdo tradere / hostemque in visceris-
bus nostri sequeus herentem ex insano insa-
nissimū reddere / Et quoniā / B / O / Turco-
rum mentionem facit / profecto cum eo in
bello / ex / per annos regeremur / Sustines

remusq; humeris christianorum periculori.
totam molem / Fessi autem, diuturnitate
belli et potentissimis hostis copiis / exerti;
sibusq; opem quereremus nunquam con-
spicimus vidimus italiam ad auxilium fe-
rendum desiderio pacis italie / Nunc autem
si deo placet / deteriori sumus condicione q̃
Hercules iste / Lassus siquidem et periculis
tantibus bello nobis / pacē, fruuntur alij pe-
unte nunc illo / Idem; illi ad arma concurs-
runt / Et profecto non suspicari non possus
mus non amore pacis conuenisse / Sed vic-
toria nostra commotos conspirauisse / Neq;
dictum hoc volumus pp / Co / S / cui semper
et honos dei / et gregis sui pap / atq; tranq̃l-
litas ista cordi fuit / Et ob eam rem multa
magnaq; incredibili ardore animi et carita-
te perfecit / longe plura maioraq; perfec-
tura / Si per eos maxime qui nunc paci
patrocinari videntur / S / eidē testē licu-
isset / Neq; etiam id dictum volumus aut
pp Reuerendissimos Dominos Cardi-
nales / quorum sanctissimum propositum
et desiderium communis Christianorum

pacis perspicuum clarissimumq; / est aut
propter Serenissimos castello reges quib9
omnibus poene seculis purissimo amore
et sincera beniuolencia deuicti fuimus / Dic
tum fortasse fuerit propter nonnullos al
lios quibus neque pax nostra neq; bellū
potest satisfacere / nam cum in pace sumus
omnes adhibent artes / Et nos in bella cons
iiciant / et ea quidem periculosissima / cum in
bello versamur victores nos pati non pos
sunt / Quid iniquius / Si tamen hie
satisfactum non erit / satisfactum pro
fecto fore confidimus / S / M / equissime /
iustissime plentissime satisfactum equis
simo iudici nostro domino iesu cristo / cuius
sanctā fidem religionemq; per annos plus
quam sexcentos corporibus et sanguine tu
tati sumus cuius sanctissimos vicarios pu
ta benedictione sum9 prosecuti / pro hie pugi
nauimus / principes reges non exstimaui
mus xpo illorum ecclesie Romane digni
tate / Proinde B / pater qua deet reueren
cia supplicamus / S / M / Et si qua reliqua
est bene merenti gracia / si quid iusticie res
bus in humanis Usquam est / sinat ducem

istum Ferrariensem ea fortuna vti / quam
ipse maluit / Bellū optauit bello exspecta-
tur / speruit / B / W / contempsit oblationes
nostras percipiat fructum quem meruit per-
tinacia / Non credimus profecto aut digni-
tate aut meritis in censu duci Ferrariensi
Quid ille Vnquam pro re cristiana aut e-
git / aut cogitauit / Nos si dixerimus mag-
na fecisse notabimur arrogancia / Modestia
semper Verū deuit facta animi magnitudo
Linquatur ergo Vestro et totius orbis iu-
dicio quid sperare possit / B / W / ab hoc ho-
mine non videmus / a nobis certe potest /
si nō grande aliquid / quale tamen aliquid
aliquando gessimus / Attamen et sperare
potest adiutore deo multa eiusmodi / cur
iudigne ferat / W / B / Victoriam nostram /
Non consilium conuocauimus / cisma pro-
curauimus / Non eam bello persecuti sum9 /
Neq3 hactenus didicimus cum infideli mi-
lite bello christianos petere / sane ecclesie be-
neficium hoc in nos collatum sanguine nos-
tro emptum / et tutabimur officijs et dabi-
mus enige operam vt perperā locatum nō
videatur / statutum bona lenia Vestra patet

sancte / decretumq; est bellum prosequi / Na
sicuti sanctissimi patriarche benedictio filio
semel impressa auelli inde / aut non potuit /
aut certe non debuit / ita nos haud sperare
non possumus foederum epitum eius belli
ad quod summi sanctiq; pontificis auctoritas
mouerit / impulerit / concitauerit /

S E
Vii Januarii M DCCC lxxxi

Sacro Collegio Reuerendorum
Dominorum Cardinalium /

r Eddite sunt nobis littere / D / M /
Reuerendissimi in Christo Patres /
et Domini in causa Ferrariensi / que
tam et si tota propter illius principis

in nos ingratiitudinem et iniurias acerbis-
sima est/ Non potuimus tamen illas non
videre et legere ea reuerencia et obseruancia
quam sacro isti collegio debemus/et semper
habuimus/sane prae se ferre videntur optis-
morum / christiane religionis patrum seu
dium et diligentia/ qui ea querunt et op-
tant/que nisi alia insint maxima in se spe-
cie habent honestatis et officij / Qualia sit
ea que dicimus exemplum litterarum nos-
trarum ad summum pontificem hisce inser-
tum abunde docebit / Laude tamen et sum-
ma omnium commendatione dignissimum
Bestrum Collegium est / sumere patrocini-
um concordie / et ad pacem omnes hor-
tari / Cuius ipsius non diffitemur alie
quando etiam cum hoc Hercule cupidi-
ores extitisse maiorum nostrorum Exem-
plo qui nunquam bellum intulerunt nisi
lacetiffi/pacem quo adhauc cupierunt /
Nunc autem tot tantaq; interuenere alio-
rum stulticia/ Aliorum malignitate vt sa-
ne mirum in modum doleamus nos qui
semper isti sanctissimo Collegio quibus
cunq; in rebus obtemperare consueuimus

et eius hortamenta pro preceptis exipere /
describis humanissimis hortacionibus obse-
qui / et morem gerere non posse / Singula
enim pro rerum temporūq; et causarū qua-
litate moderari principes necesse est / Quā
sit hoc verum / Docuit verū ōniū ōnipotens
dominus qui dedit suū dēriq; rei modū
Et quāuis esset in benignitatem propensior
pertinaces tamen in peccatis flagellis detur-
bare sit solitus / Miserti a principio sumus
Ferrariensis istius ducis poenam q; pec-
cati distulim⁹ quousque spes fuit respisce-
re eum posse / iniuriamq; dignoscere / Quis
q; et amplius annorum patientiam nostrā
Vicit eius pertinacia postquam effusa Vis
est auri principatu illius preciosior ciues
nostri tum Ferro / tum paludibus absump-
ti petitur pax sane intempestive / paci ac
quiescere debuit initio optimi et amplissi-
mi domini / Tum cum pater clementissim⁹
quietisq; cupientissimus pacem pcellat⁹
tur si fili⁹ abstineret iurij⁹ / Addidit pec-
cato obstinationem / quam tante esse maligni-
tatis tantoq; odio sibi deus testatus est /
Et neq; in hoc seculo / nec in futuro miseri

cordia dignum existimauerit perſinacem/
Monetis vt fugiamus ſuſpicionem cupi-
ditatis dominandi/ Sapienter ſane et pa-
terne / Sed dabitur ne ſuſpicioni locus/ ſi
per quinqz annos iniuriam foederum Vis-
olatorũ et ſupra trecentiſimum annum par-
tarum ſanguine noſtro imunitatum ferre
diucius non potuimus / Detur ambitioni
cum id bello queritur quod iuſtum equum
qz non eſt/ aut cum ſine mora irrequiſita
parte altera/ ne forte poeniteat ad arma cõ-
curritur/ In nos autem que nã relinqui-
tur calumnie ratio/ qui vt diximus ſetuliſ-
ſima repetiuimus confinem appellauimus
pacate monuimus / Arma diſtuli-
mus per tot annos / perſinacitatem indies
in propoſito manſuetudine noſtra reddidi-
mus/ Turbarunt italiẽ pacẽ/ quorum tur-
bare nos eſt/ Et qui miſerũ illũ pollicitas
tionibus illectum/ vt bellum quam pacẽ
mallet impulerunt / Non autem nos qui
nihil omiſimus hortando / monendo orando
deniqz pacẽ mallet quam bellum/ prædix-
imus cõteſtati ſumus fore vt ſtultitiẽ poe-
nas daret/ Cetera que ad cauſam noſtram

pertinent / ex litteris nostris ad summum
pont / Intelligent Excellencie Vestre / Ex
quibus existimamus fore neminem tam
oborti maligniqz iudicij q nos exarguat
in noxa esse / aut quicquam omisisse quod
modestissimos et temperantissimos debeat /

S E

Vni Jan M CCCC lxxxi

Excripte xi diae antedicti

Sixtus Papa Quartus

Dilecto filio Nobili Viri
Johanni Moenico/ Vene-
tiarum Duci Salutem

¶ Cripimus superloribus diebus pa-
terna charitate tue nobilitati/ causas
non minus Iustas quam necessarias /
quae nos pro totius italie vniqz publice
Christiane incolumitate ad pacem compos-
nendam impulerunt/ hortantes Ut eandem
susciperes/ et a bello Ferrarie/quae nostra
et Romane Ecclesie ciuitas est abstinere
ac occupata restituere / Idqz tecum Ver-
bis humanissimis egimus/nec Vnum qui-
dem Verbum quod te honorem & tuum
lederet inseruimus / Tu vero responsi-
uas ad nos litteras dedisti/ longe ali-
ter a te scriptas quam Ipsi nos lec-
turos sperauerimus / Ferrariense

bellum Carijs fucantes coloribus / et ea nos
his imponētes quae nunquam extiterūt /
neq; in mentem nostram Unquam incide-
runt / atq; ideo nos molestia summoq; do-
lore affecerunt / mentem enim animumq; tu-
um a pace ac societate quā publicam in I-
talia conficere statueramus alienum esse /
vehementerq; abhorreere significarunt / Ex-
paueramus sane nos posse quociens velles-
mus de te eq; ac de filio nostro quouis ob-
sequentiſſimo decernere / atq; ita quando ce-
teris italie vel principibus vel potentati-
bus pacem ipsam societatemq; conficiendam
persuaseramus / Videbamur sic omnia conse-
cuti / Et ad eandem ipsam preclarissimam
rem nihil nobis relinqueretur difficultas
tis nihil q; negotij / Sed sumus decepti /
Ideo in sola rerum veritate respondebim⁹
que nec aboleri quamuis velari potest / nec
verborū leuocinia aut arte obsiderat / Rōnes
n̄ras ad pacē a nobis susceptā nō mō nō po-
tas / s; etiā deseruisse nos foedus tuū obis-
cis / cū luce clarius a te desertū / a nobis ob-
seruatū fuerit / qui nō ea modo / quae i eo
continentur obseruauimus / Sed tua causa

in discrimine fere ultimo devenimus. Ins-
ter nos nil aliud nisi ad communem sta-
tum defensionem habitum est / neq; illis
poterat / aut audebat quicquam via facti
innouare / Litteris apostolicis de consilio
venerabilium fratrum nostrorum pro pa-
ce ipsa / ac bono fidei grauissimis censuris
adiectis prohibentibus / a nobis nihil in-
nouatum / nec aliqua / belli gerendi occasio
data / aut ostentata unquam fuit / Qui cū
iure optimo possemus nostros subditos no-
bis grauiter delinquentes punire / ne tas-
men illa pacis turbande occasio daretur / et
omnium iniuriarum obliuisci / et illis par-
tem maluimus / Nullus italie potentatus
contra te aliquid innouauit / Tu primus
nobis ignorantibus basitis seu propug-
naculis erectis innouasti / quae intra tuos
fines construxisse aiebas / Dux vero fer-
rariensis intra suos ad quintum ferme la-
pidem fecisse querebatur / neq; vero adduci
poteramus te id in nostrū cōscriptū / et pe-
narū apostolicarū elusione / nro iter nos
foedere pmanēte / effecisse / Quandoquidē te
nostrarū rerū atque honoris nostri / et hui9

sanctę sedis defensorem / non offensorem cer-
to credamus / Statim igitur vt eam per
te innouacionem resauimus / Scripsimus /
et te ad compositionem enixe hortati fuim9
Quāquidem innouacionem si antea cogno-
uissēmus / antea certe ad te litteras dedis-
semus / humaniores tamen in eo negotio
fuimus q̄ itra tuos fines terminos con-
stituisse / et Ferrariensē Ducem modo pacis
a maioribus suis seruata vellet inuios
stabiliter seruare / filij loco te recepturū res-
pondetis / nobisq; persuadetas nulla te rō-
ne i bellū a ut in Ferrariam occupandam /
sed in fines tuos tutandos / iuraq; animū
habere / Quāobrem cū pp ipsorū ppugnacu-
lorū in totius italie pacē erectionē sinuatū
fuisse ificiari nō posset / quāuis ad penarū
i litteris apliceis q̄tētarū executionē requisi-
ti fuissē9 / inde cupientes h̄modi discordias
paterna charitate sopire / et ignē potius extin-
guere / quā augere / exhortati etiā ipsū fuis-
m9 Ducem ad pactorū / sicuti maiores sui
fecerant / obseruacionē / que eadē illa se ob-
seruaturū tibi obtulisse rescribit / Tu vero
cū nō eomō eū obtulisse nobis significas /

ses ne qđ tñ ad cōpositionē idē nos faciēdā
desset / Misim⁹ tādē verborū formā i scrip-
tis / quā ipse dux se obseruasse dixit / qđ a
te negatū tamē fuit / atq; ob id ipsi⁹ ducis
ei⁹q; cōfederatorū oratores / promissionem
sub eadē verborū formula i cōsistorio nro
se facturos obtulerūt / Literasq; tua⁹ lige
attulerūt / qbz ad nos sacrūq; collegiū nos-
trū oēs hmoi cōtrouersias retulerūt / polli-
cētēs qđd a nobis dāsi foret / apprime ex-
pleturū / Tu vero a nob̄ ut id faceres / qđ
sane di rōe et p̄fzti federis nri facere debu-
isses / tuāes rogat⁹ noluisti / nescim⁹ rōnū
ne / et iusticie / an nri diffidēcia et q̄tēptu /
Affirmabis te i reb̄ ferrariēsis nullū nos-
cere supiorē / qđ tā et si q̄tra honestatē q̄tra
iura ac sātorū patrū decreta q̄tra nr̄m foe-
d⁹ / i nr̄m q̄tēptū ac nostre autoritatis et
iurisditōis iminutōnē plane eet / quia ta-
mē idē nullū bellū sz q̄cordiā securā p̄sua-
seras / tollerauim⁹ oīa / atq; sēp te quātū
potēram⁹ hortabamur / et ad beniuolēciā res-
ditegrādā / ad quā ipse dux se offerebat / ro-
gabam⁹ / his de causis nō satis ad mirari
possum⁹ cōsulcō te obliuisci eorū que ad te

iam antea scripseramus / Q. neqꝫ cum tuo
hic oratore sepe diuqꝫ egeramus / quo quis
dem in tempore / nec aurum per te effusum /
nec mortui ciues / nec hostis obsessus / imo
ne declaratus quidem / Tu vero respondes
exhortationes nostras non in tempore / opti
mo actionum humanarum iudicē / sed in
belli fine esse adhibitas / post tantam im
pensem / post plurimum ciuium mortem / post
obessum hostem / Ignoramus certe / quae
noua ista calumniandi ratio inuenta sit /
eum vel a principio te pacem optasse ais !
ad quam si ante bellum hortati te fuisses
mus facile quiduis a te obtinuissimus /
Hec excusatio minime recipienda est / Verba
enim nobis data nullꝫ negare audebit qui
videat quae sunt consecuta / ex quibus as
nimus erga nos tuus ante bellum / et pre
sumpta belli ratio in Ferraria nostra capi
enda Luce clarius apparet / Ut quae si fa
cta per nos vere existimare uoles / Videbis
profecto quod ad concordiam / quod ad foe
dus nostrum obseruandum attinuerit
Nos et litteris satisfecisse / et cum tuo ora
tore sepe diuqꝫ egisse / nihil praetera omi

sisse/ quod tuo honori/et quieti italïae ar-
bitraremur fore / Noluimus ad censuras
vullae progredi/ quoniã cõcordiae/et belli
minime faciendi spem certam dabo / In
qua cū essemus/te qz nihilominus ad iura
tua nobis mittenda hortaremur/ Tu tamen
contra Ferrariã cõtra Justiciã/cõtra nos
quos a bello abhorere sciebas/nobis peni-
tus inscis/aperto iam Marte impia arma
mouisti/Et Ut nostrũ in te aimũ/ foedus
qz nostrũ obseruatum clarius perspicias/
Vide quid per te passi fuimus/Venit Cala-
bri Dux/transitum pro defensione cognati
fovoris/nepotũ/a nobis petijt / et si dene-
garemus arma in nos se conuersurũ affir-
mauit / Poteramus ei ad iniuriam pro-
pulsandã proficiscẽti / Poteramus foedere
nostro qd ad nrõz statũ dũtaxat defen-
sionẽ intũ erat/iuuuolatu/poteramus pro
italïae pace a te turbata iure optimo/et deo
nostro auspice per Vrbes agrosqz nostros
transitum dare/ Non fecimus tamen prop-
terea qd tuus orator tuo noĩe nobis per
suasit concordiam citò prouenturam / et si

quid molestie vsquam nobis eueniret / Po-
tentissimam classem in Apuliam / et exer-
citus in nostram defensionem / te apprimè
huc transmissurum / omnes hinc hostes
quom primum retrahaturum / Nos persuasi
haec te moliri / Et ad concordiam Ducem
ipsum adduceres non Et bellum excitares /
transitum minime concessimus / sed non cō-
positio aliqua / immo bellum acerrimū con-
tra subito exortum est / Venit idem duplex ar-
matus in agrum Romanum / pleraq; oppi-
da in oculis nostris constituta coepit / castra
in suburbis Romanis posuit / commeatus
terra mariq; interclusit / Latium oē et quies
quid interiarentis soli vsq; ad ipsa moenia
erat cōflāmauit / iā seditio domi forisq; e-
rat / pleriq; Romanorū procerū a nobis de-
fecerant / omnia ruitura / et in discrimine
etiam vitae nostrae constituta erant / ob id
solū q̄ tibi fauere dicebamur / q̄ si tunc te
deserere voluissē⁹ nihil profecto cōtra nos
molitum aut actum fuisset / et cū per Alce-
xas et oratorem tuū auxilia per te ratione
foederis nobis debita / et promissa pete-
mus / Protrahetur in maiores dies

Ut extrema quaeque constituti tibi ad Ferrariam oppugnandam consentiremus/ Itaque non deuotione ac zelo in nos tuo / sed ne bellum Ferrariae solueretur misisti post tot mala classem in ualidam tandem alii quando / quae minus ad id quod simulabas instructa / vel unum hominem retraxisti Immo hostilem exercitum amplius auxit Statimque eandem ipsam classem in Ferrariam retraxisti/ Ut vel hinc quisque perspiciat in bellum Ferrariense non ad nostri defensionem eam omnem fuisse comparatam Itaque cum nullum auxilium ex classe eiusmodi habuerimus / sperabamus te qui Bis/m/equitum / peditum / Bis/m/pro communi statuum defensione tenere ex foedere debebas / quamprimum Robertum malactam a nobis enixe antea petiitum / Cum suis equitibus nobis in tantis calamitatibus constitutis concessurum / qui non ad Ferrariam / sed ad lignacaballum confederat / scriptis utriusque ageretur / premellamur in singulis dies acris / Misimus tamen nostrum ad te oratorem Ut tuis uerbis / in quot quantisque resceretur periculis exponeret / Robertumque cum

luis militibz peteret/ Extergisti tu in ea re
spōsione dies cōplures /negasti tādē / Inde
veritus ne opera nostra bellū Ferrariense
solueretur/ Simul Et magnā noīs tui nos
tam effugeres/ post Terraciā post ciuitatē
castelli/ post beneuentum nobilissimas/ S/
Ne/ ciuitates amissas/ post tot milites nos
tuos prefatū Robertum in Bebe ipsa cōmo
rātes/ febri pesteqz absūptos/ misisti Rober
tum sine milite/ et deinde militem sine sei s
pendio/ Vbi in nostro exercitu instaurando/
et pecuniā Robertino militi tribuendo non
parua auri Vis absorpta/ et erarium apos
tolicum exhaustum adeo fuit/ Et nisi deus
ipse noscer eā nobis mēte inieciisset/ Et tam
repente hostilem exercitū aggredētur nos
tri profecto rem Romanā nō haberemus /
Iustus igitur deus nobis Victoriā dedit /
quae tamē a te adeo illiberaliter nobis ex
probatū q̄si tuo ductu et tuorū opa/ nō dei
nutu illā cōsecuti simus. Nā si tuorū in nrō
exercitu oratoris et prouiditoris/ nullo pac
to esse cōfligendum acclamantiū/ cōfido
potes obtepasset nrī/ elapsa oīs de maibz

Victoria nunquam aut sero ad nos se con-
tulisset/ Profligauimus in agro Roma-
no exercitum illorum quibus fautoribus
vestrum quoq; aliquando profligauimus
Vtrumq; sane deo immortali auctore/ Vni
ei debemus omnia/ Neq; aduersus nosips
sos bellum nunquam gessisti/ qui partib9
nostris semper fauisse iactas/ Conatus
q; fuisti non modo collegijs litteris/ et or
atoribus tuis/ Verum omni Via e sede nos
tra nos deturbare/ Eorum tamen omnium
eadem pacis ratione oblitifueramus/ Verū
cum post Victoriam ipsam/ nobis admodū
necessarium visum fuisset in nostros sub
ditos/ S eorum nouissimam rebellionem
animaduertere/ esseq; propterea opus eis
dem militibus tuis/ illi tuorum mandato
commeatum petierunt/ nec pecunia nec gra
tia ad complusculos dies teneri potuerūt/
quorum recessu per tuos accelerato/ omnis
nostra in illis puniendis voluntas frustra
ta est/ et aisterne amissio insecuta/ et ad
cauum nostri exercitus solutio facta est/
Dux Calabria cum exercitu reuersus in
Cāpaniā prouinciā ipsā urbem incursoib9

varijs infestabat/Quorum omnium te tertio
rem per oratorem tuum et nostras litteras se
cimus / ac quid tunc opus esset pecunia/
// et militibus edocimus nec tamen nos
bis in tantis rerum difficultatibus tanto
qz vitae nostrae periculo obrutis/militem
quidem unum aut obolum ex foedere tri
buere voluisti/Q uinimo nobis aperte des
clarasti nihil amplius subsidij aut suffra
gij nobis suppeditare posse sicqz in tantis
periculis pp te nobis constitutis et obse
fis oia tua studia/omnemqz conatum/Vim
deniqz omnem /non vt tu a principio dice
bas/ob tuorum finium conseruationem/ sed
ob ferrariam nram/et Romane ecclesie ciui
tatem preclaram diripiendam contulisti /
Non hoc foedus nostrum / non aequitas/
non religio/ postulat/ vt cum foedus icu
sit pro comuni defensione statuum / Tua
uuc tame arma cotra nos cu periculo nos
trarum rerum reliquarum couerteris/ et nuc tu
nobis aut te foedus seruasse/ aut illud no
deseruisse / aut a nobis et romana ecclesia
te non alienasse argumentaberis / Quae
auxilia tu nob ex foedere prestitisti/ si bellu

non hostibus nostris / sed nobis adeo impi-
um intulisti / Non certe tecum coniuncti as-
pius eramus / cum tu vi et armis nostra
diripiens / tua sponte atq; consilio te a no-
bis seiunxeris. Sola igitur cum essem9 / et
foedus nostru tu ita apertissime fregisses /
et nostram ciuitatem hostiliter obsedisses /
quid inquam nos pro nostra defensione / pro
authoritatis apostolicæ sedis conseruatione
pro rerum per te occupatarum recuperatio-
ne / ac pro iusticia ipsa / quid nos inquam
facere ex Romane ecclesie dignitate oppor-
tuit / Id sane quod fecimus / Ut scilicet paz-
cem iniremus cum his qui pacem italie as-
mat et nobiscum pro ipsarum rerum defen-
sione / atq; recuperatione omnia sua studia
opesq; profunderè decuruerunt / Non igitur
de pace acta queri te / si ad ea etiam aduers-
teris quae iusticiae consentanea sunt / con-
uenit / neq; quod nos Victoria ipsa quic-
quā non moueat qui optime oīū scim9 ab
hno deo optimo nobis datam / Ut hoc ipsū
qd nunc curamus efficeremus / Nos nō vi-
cim9 Ut bellū sēp geram9 / sed publicā pacē
impetram9 / ob quā Victoriā nobis diuina

providencia attulit/fuit itaqz nostrū propo-
situm honestissimū/ Tuū quod nunc magis
ime deprehendimus non tale/quicquid/n/
favoris nobis prestitisti / id sane egisti nō
ad religionis/ aut nostram ipsorum causā
sed ut imperium Ferrariense tibi vendi
caves/ Cum iam pridem te inhiatissime in-
minere littere tue declarant/ Non fuit nos-
trum propositum iustis dominis sua eripes-
se / non fuit deniqz bellum ex bello serere /
sed fuit hoc ipsum/ qd nunc est/ pacem in
italiam publicam conficere/ Sicqz religio-
ni christiane consulere / Cui nos scimus
a deo immortalī / Vel amplificande/Vel recte
tuende prepositos/Huic ipsi rei studuimus
semper et nunc sic studemus/ Ut aduersan-
ti tibi graviter irascamur / Quod vero ad
pacem te hortari nihil esse aliud quā nūc
de manibus tuis Victoriam extorqueri/ si-
mulqz ad libidinem hostium/ toti te mū-
do derisui tradere autumas/ Non satis ad-
mirari possumus/ tanto te errore duci/ In
quo te paterna / Ut semper fecimus/chari-
tate monemus/ Ut accuratius ad ea omnia as-
nimū ex religione conuertas/ nec te domi-

nādi libido e rōe deducat / hūc quē tu deris
sū putas / nos sūmā sapiēciā sūmāqz equis
tatem / Nam quo magis infinitam pecus
niae vim in bella solueris / et tot ciuiū tu
orū mortem audiueris / Victoriā qz ipsā in
manib9 habueris / eo maior honos et laus
tua erit / si cōmunē pacē oib9 relictis cōplec
teris / Cōtra vero si bellum prosequeris / Bē
dictū / statutūqz a te affirmas / Scito te
immortali deo bellū gigātū more idicere / et
derisui atqz infamie te commissurū quoniz
ā res tibi erit cum christo Ihesu deo nostro
et eius sancta ecclesia pro cuius honore et
defensione Ferrariae reb9 oib9 diuinis et
humanis adrim9 / Erit inquam tibi res /
cum reliquis italie potentatibus / qui ec
clesiā dei et italiā ipsā p te labefactari nō
finent / habes causam iniustā / bellū illicitū /
contra deū et homines pugas / Nos econ
tra iusticiā fouemus / causa Christi est / Tu
ius nos locū quāquā idigni tenemus in
terris / Totam italiā contra te accensam
prouocasti / Itaqz nisi a tanto facinore des
istas / et occupata restituas / eris christiaīs
oib9 imo ipi deo derisui imo odio / oēs enim

te alterius rei occupatorem potius quam
tue defensorem bene dicent/ Memineris dis
lecte fili Luciferum perfectionem suamitas
tem dignitatem ac excellentiam super om
nes angelos ante lapsum habuisse/sed su
perbia elatum voluisse exaltari humilia
tum et depressum esse Usq; in profundum
abissi/ Veniat tibi in mentem verbum sal
uatoris nostri / Durum est tibi contra sti
mulum calcitrare / Memineris litterarum
apostolicarum/ quibus ante Pasca excom
municati/ interdicti/ et anathematizati sunt/
ij preapue/ qui Ferrariam Civitatem nos
tram occupare nituntur / An tu his as
trictus sis poenis ipse videris/ Et Nos de
sine calumniari foederis deserti aut licen
tiae date/ nullus te ista melius scit/ nūquā
nro pmissu et q̄sū/ nō nobis sac̄tibus/ nō
suadētibz/ nō cōcitātibz ut asseris/ hoc bellū
mouisti/ imo cōtra mētē et volūtātē nostrā
nobisq; inscijs/ neq; in hominis cuiusquā
mētē cadere poterit/ voluisse nos res eccle
sie / Po/ armis tuis diripiēdas perdere/ neq;
Victoriā i manu habere iactabūd? dicas/ hāc
enim dat adimitq;/ Solus immortalis de9 c9

cā agitur/ ex quo fieri facile posse videtur
Et qui vixisse videmus breui amisisse videa
ris quātū sis progress⁹ tātū regredi cogaris
qd; si bellū prosequeris ne dubites ipsā vic
toriam cū xpō ei⁹q; spōsa/ letabūda ad nos
citō peruēturā/ Quare & dilecte fili etiā atq;
q; etiā hortamur/ requirim⁹ / et monem⁹ i
dño Et cogitationes istas ianes deponas/ ca
piditates effrenes conpescas/ arma reuoces
Ferrariā dimittas/ castrēlla per & capta res
tituas qd; suū ē possidēdū cuiq; trāquille
reliquas/ et pacem italie āplectaris/ Sicq;
rei tue totiusq; italie quieti cōsulas/ alio
quin non dissimulabim⁹ āpli⁹ Spirituali
b⁹ et tpali⁹ armis pcedere cōtra te/ Et no
bis expēdiēs videbitur/ et iusticia suadebit/
Nō enī ferēda dominādi libido ista ē/ niniū
iūhumana/ niniū iūreligiosa/ et a xpistiano
niniū aliena pferri que in christum ei⁹q;
vicariū fertur/ Pacem ergo i italia publi
cā volumus/ Et simul bellorū iūurias caue
am⁹/ simul q̄eti restituam⁹ oēs et reipub /
xpiane vnitis viribz q̄tra imānissios hos
tes cōsulam⁹/ Datū Rome M cccc lxxxiij/
xvii/Calen/Martij

Exemplum Litterarum Illustrissime
rei publice Venete ad sanctissimū Domi-
num nostrum Sixtum/ diuina prouiden-
cia pontificem quartum

Que monet suadetq; per litteras tua sanc-
titas constanter modesteq; legimus/ quic-
quid egeris lege fedoris violata nostri nos-
trisq; erga sedem apostolicam et ceteris
et recentibus meritis neglectis / ciuili feri-
mus animo/ Si soluendi et ligandi potes-
tas tibi est/ etiam in hoc genere concessa/ no-
bis sat est / nulla culpa nostra accidisse /
nos ut destituere/ qui nostris sumptibus
nostris exercitu et classe / Viperam quam
nuper in sino tuo recepisti/ que te nunc in-
cessat profugauimus / neq; tibi opibus
nostris defuimus / Ut te ac sedem apostoli-
cam summo cum nostro incommodo et peri-
culo tutaremur/ Non dolos/ non perfidiam/
non collusionem obficere nobis potes/ que
si/ Ut speramus/ omnia/ in reconciliatis a-
micis deprehendes / nil te noui expertum
esse putabis/ qui sponte in eos laqueos ex

quibus exieras / iacideris / Quid ad nos attul-
let si tibi licere putas quoniam Vicer dei geris in
terris / sacro sancti foederis / ac pacis iura vio-
lari / a te etiam petimus ut / te iunio / partem a/
maioribus nostris / partemque a / nobis questum im-
perium / salua nostra rei / publice dignitate sus-
tari possimus / Nobis nihil unquam antequam fuit
pace / quod sepe fouit / auxitque libertatem nostram non
minus quam bellum neque maiores nostri neque nos un-
quam bellum suscepimus nisi ut ex eo fundamenta pa-
cis iungeremur / Nuper / non propagandi cupi-
ditate imperii / sed tuende libertatis nostre cau-
te duce ac monitore pugnauimus / quod in re / si
nos destituis / sancte iter nos pacis nostre iure
neglecto / non videmus quod ratione suadere pacem nos-
bis possis / quod iam facta asseueratione / iura pa-
cis obturbas / Hoc postquam tue sanctitati licere
vis / equo animo ferimus / modo libertati atque di-
gnitati nostre / labores / opes / vitam civium / etiam
te nosse / debita tamen non neges / Demum vero
pro nostra in sanctitati tuae obseruancia / quam incolu-
mne / a te etiam destituti / obseruauimus / Lauda-
mus consilium pacis / in quo nec incostancia / nec dolus
nec perfidia versetur / que dignitatem nostre rei
publice non iminuat / quam denique demum potius

quā accipiam⁹ / Deūqz optimū maxie quo
fidiana illa deprecatione obsecramur / et pacē
tuā nr̄is cōcedē tēporib⁹ / et ab ecclesia tua
cūctā repellē neq̄tiā / Nos / et sedē ap̄licā et
traditā tue fidei ecclesiā / scitātī tue cōmēda
m⁹ / ne iter fideles / tumult⁹ oriātur / ne de
Blasphēiā i christiāos seuiēdi / occupādiqz ita
liā / occasio furcturis i hoc tuo pōtificatū pre
statur / Que oīa prope cōspiciam⁹ / et qd⁹ ad
nos attinet / eo min⁹ moleste nos latūri sum
m⁹ / quo cōmodius ex his causis nobis sus
tari rei publicē nr̄e statū licebit / Sūm⁹ atqz
qz oīpotēs deus Sāctitātī tue det verbo et
exēplo qbz p̄res proficere / et suo nutu cūcta
disponat / Nos tōt iā ānos i fidei christiāe
appugnatione versati / bellis qz assueti diffi
cilitatib⁹ / et publicis et priuatis confectis non
dubitauimus / Idem tanto enīpius impos
sibile / quāto peculiari⁹ res agitur / effectus
iri / Quid si Blasphemur / opes opib⁹ obru
emur / et scelus sceleris / si fieri aliter non po
terit / obiciemus / Tantum polliceri de nos
his poteris apostolicē sedi quantum ip̄sa
seruitus / quantumqz salua senatus Con
sueti dignitate prestare licebit /

Finiunt sex Elegantiſſime epiſtole /
quarum tres a ſummo Pontifice Sixto
Quarto et Sacro Cardinalium Collegio
ad Illuſtriſſimum Venetiarum Ducem
Joannem Mocenigum totidemq; ab ipſo
Duce ad eundem Pontificem et Cardina-
les / ob Ferrarienſe bellum ſuſceptum / con-
ſcripte ſunt / Impreſſe per Willelmum Cay-
ſon / et diligenter emendate per Petrum
Cämehannū Poetaz Lauratum / in beſſi
monaſterio.

Eboq; cultor ſex has mercare tabellas
Que poſſunt Marco cum Ciarone loqui
Ingenijs debent cultis ea ſcripta placere
In quibus ingenij copia magna ſiget

Interpretatio magnarum litterarum /
placuarũ / paruarũq;

Re p/i/republica / Robertus Maſa / i / mas
ſaſta / Orato / procura / S / Mar / i / oratori
procuratori ſancti Marci / Et c / i / et cetera /
Salut / et apoſtolica benedi / i / ſalutem et
apoſtolica benedictione / vi p / i / vi publica /

Vener fratru nostroru / S / R / E / i / Veneras
bilia fratru nostrorum sacre Romane ec
clesie / ferd / i / ferdinandus / po / Ro / i / popu
lus Romanus / pon / nostri / i / pontificatus
nostri / L / Grifus / i / Leonardus grifus / D
S / i / domino Joanni / S / R / E / car / i / sa
cre Romane ecclesie cardinales / Dia / i / di
aconi / Sanctiss / do / n / i / Sanctissimus do
minus noster / Excellen / do / i / excellencia
vestra / S / sua / i / sanctitatem suam / Vestre cel
/ i / Vestre celsitudinis / Ser / i / Serenissimo /
do / cel / i / Vestra celsitudo / sua bea / i / sua bea
tudo / Summi Pont / i / summi pontificis /
S / do / i / sanctitatis vestre / B / do / i / beatiss
sime pater / S / do / i / sanctitas vestra / B /
vestre / i / beatitudini vestre / do / B / i / Vestre
beatitudini / D / R / i / Dominos Cardina
les / S / E / i / Senatus consultus / R / D / car
i / reuerendorum dominorum cardinalium /
D / do / Reueren / in Christo pater / i / domi
nationum vestrarum Reuerendi in christo
patres / n / i / enim / Summum pont / i / sum
mum pontificem

TRANSLATION OF THE SIX VERY ELEGANT EPISTLES.

HERCULES, Duke of Ferrara, having been established in that Duchy by the Venetians, a short while afterwards violates their most ancient privileges; and enters into a treaty with Ferdinand, King of Naples, the Duke of Milan, and the Republic of Florence, which by the Venetian treaties was not allowed. The Venetians demand reparation. He refuses. Pope Sixtus IV., abandoning the treaty with Ferdinand, gives his support to the Venetians. Ferdinand, indignant, with the view of drawing the Pontiff off, provokes him with wrongs. The Pope exhorts the Venetians to make war upon the Duke of Ferrara. This they do, and harass the country both by the river Po and by land. Ferdinand, considering that stronger measures should be adopted, induces Alphonso the younger, Duke of Calabria, to ravage the borders of the Roman States with war, and Sixtus asks help from the Venetians both by sea and land. The Venetians send a powerful fleet for this purpose, besides a large sum of

money both for horse and foot soldiers. The Pope, although far superior in force, had he any desire to use it, asks the Venetians for the services of Robert Malatesta as general in the campaign. He, with fifteen hundred horse-soldiers, leaving the war in Ferrara, flies to the succour of the Pontiff. The fleet lays waste the entire coast of the kingdom. The Venetian Commander, Malatesta, routs the Duke of Calabria with all the Royal forces. A triumph for this was celebrated at Rome. The Pope repents of this victory, which he declines to follow up, fearing that the Venetians might become inflated with the double glory of having routed the King and of having subdued Ferrara. Negotiations for peace and a treaty were at once commenced between him and the King's confederates. The Venetians molest Ferrara as much as possible, and, after capturing nearly all the neighbouring towns, invest it with a blockade. The Pope not only makes peace, but enters into a fresh treaty with their enemies. He also sends a legate with forces to the assistance of the Ferrarese, under the command of the Duke of Calabria, who had previously been defeated, and who now enlisted five hundred Turks in the service of the war. Meanwhile, the Pope writes to the Venetians and exhorts them for the sake of the peace of all Italy, to lay down their arms, restore the captured places, and raise the siege of Ferrara. The College of Cardinals writes to almost the same purpose. The Venetians, both on account of the Pope's dignity, and the disgrace of the violated treaty,

entrust the answering of these demands to Bernard Giustiniani, soldier, orator, and procurator of St. Mark's, who, because he was most eloquent and wise, and because he then held principal place in the Senate, was considered by all persons to be the best qualified to perform that task.

TO OUR BELOVED SON THE NOBLE JOHN MOCENIGO,
DOGE OF VENICE, ETC., POPE SIXTUS THE IV.

BELOVED SON, health and Apostolic benediction. Since the time when we were first advanced to the dignity of head of the Church, by the Divine clemency, though with insufficient merits of our own, we have deemed nothing more important than by the utmost care, the utmost ingenuity and industry to promote the interests of peace, both because we thought nothing more in accordance with the duty of our position as a pacific Sovereign, and because we saw nothing more salutary for the Christian community violently attacked by the most cruel barbarians, and afflicted with very great and continual disasters. Inflamed with this desire, not only have we urged Italy to a mutual agreement of opinions—sending for the ambassadors of its potentates more frequently—but we have exhorted, and again and again invoked, Transalpine princes and the most remote nations through legates and Nuncios sent to them for the same purpose. But if at any time we have been impelled by injuries from

any quarter to take up arms contrary to our fixed habit, when spiritual threats were of no avail, we have done so reluctantly and under provocation for the preservation of ecclesiastical liberty, for the sake of which we ought, if necessary, to sacrifice even our life. And this, indeed, has been done with the intent that, after the settlement of affairs by war, a wished-for peace may follow, such as we have always advocated in our mind, and have longed for with heartfelt craving. But when, contrary to our desire in this respect, Italy some months since, with the co-operation of the enemy of human peace, engaged in a dangerous and grievous war, and the madness of war had reached such a pitch that we also righteously provoked for your sake were subjected to numerous losses and hardships, and lost many of our cities and towns; when we saw the City of Rome infested with a blockade, almost the entire country laid waste, its inhabitants roused into sedition against us, our shores harried by a hostile fleet, our city cut off from provisions, right of passage prohibited to those who from every nation on the globe were accustomed to travel to Rome, so that the Roman Court was being ruined; when we saw the ecclesiastical revenues of our brethren, the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, and of other prelates intercepted, many of our own servants in open rebellion, acting hostilely towards us, Ferrara, a renowned city of the Church, placed in manifest peril, and all Italy aflame with intestine war; when also our very dear children in Christ, Ferdinand and Isabella,

the most wise and pious Sovereigns of Castille—considering and pondering in their minds how afflicting to Christendom, how pernicious to the Apostolic See, how perilous to the Catholic Faith such disturbances must be, on account of the schism in the Church of God, which by some was already being effected—induced by a pious zeal for universal concord sent to us to humbly beg for peace ; when our venerable brethren themselves, when the Roman People, and other ecclesiastical cities, and also the other potentates of Italy supplicated, and implored us with the most urgent prayers to the same effect:—we have deemed it right to comply with their highly honourable aspiration, especially since this is in accordance with our original resolve and natural bias in favour of procuring and securing peace. And we have fallen upon times in which nothing is more to be desired, nothing is more necessary than that Italy should be at amity within itself, should lay down its arms, restore what has been captured by either party, put aside hatred and revenge, and rest in mutual tranquillity ; if we wish to be truly Christians, if we desire to defend and protect our liberty, our fortunes, the worship of God, and our religion, than which nothing ought to be more dear to us, against that most cruel nation of Turks, which is now threatening the destruction of Italy. Wherefore, since we are persuaded that both you and your renowned Republic are not averse to this common good, since you have at all times loved peace, and sought to remove all causes of discord, we, seeing that all the other States desire and ask to be united

with us in mutual tranquillity, exhort you with paternal affection to give your adhesion to this holy and desirable unity, to lay down your arms, to restore your conquests, to abandon your hostile proceedings in Ferrara, and no further assail our city aforesaid with war and siege. This truly will not only be worthy of your supreme wisdom, when you consider in what danger all Italy is involved, but it will be so honourable and glorious for you that you will obtain immortal praise from all men. At the same time, we offer not to be wanting in prompt and swift justice to Your Excellence, should you have complaint to lodge against the Duke in question.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, under the ring of the Fisherman, the 11th day of December, 1482, in the twelfth year of our Pontificate.

L. GRIFUS.

TO THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE LORD JOHN
MOCENIGO, THE MOST WORTHY DOGE OF VENICE,
OUR VERY DEAR FRIEND, THE CARDINAL, BISHOPS,
PRIESTS, AND DEACONS OF THE HOLY ROMAN
CHURCH.

WE, the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, by the Divine mercy, Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, to the most illustrious Prince, the Lord Doge of Venice, with our

sincere affection in the Lord. How much our most holy Lord and we have not only always loved the peace and quietness of Italy, but have with all care, industry, and zeal exerted ourselves in that cause, is manifest, we think, to the most humble as well as to wise men, from the many very evident proofs which His Holiness wisely and truly puts in writing; but chiefly from the fact that in former years His Holiness and we, being most anxious for the quiet of Italy, chose to prefer peace of any kind to a war in which the Church had by far the advantage. Of this indeed we make the more account, because we saw that such war was carried on contrary to the wish and intent of His Holiness and of us, through the very great desire of Your Excellency. Who then would not in the highest degree praise both His Holiness and ourselves, if, persevering in our laudable resolution of procuring and maintaining the peace of Italy, we have substituted universal peace and concord, very much in accordance with the persuasions and supplications of the Serene King and Queen of Spain, through their Ambassadors sent to us for the purpose, and at the desire of nearly all Italy, for the present and dangerous war in which those losses and hardships to the Siege Apostolic and the Holy Roman Church, which, His Holiness recites, have been sustained on behalf of Your Highness? Truly no one but a disturber of peace itself and of the Christian religion. All these things His Holiness and we have done so much the more willingly, because we readily believed that, as in the

former war you were inclined towards peace, so now Your Highness would be prepared to accede to a common and mutual concord, to the restoration of conquests, after the example of the other Italian powers, and to the laying aside of hatreds and revengeful feelings. We therefore, with all the earnestness in our power, exhort Your Excellency, who have always been accustomed to destroy the seeds of discords, that, like the other Principalities of Italy, you should yourself desire to accede to this common concord, so opportune for thwarting and ruining the designs of the enemies of the Catholic faith, to lay down your arms, and to raise the siege of Ferrara, that renowned city of the Church; for the execution of which, should Your Highness give orders, as from your singular justice and wisdom we trust and hope will be the case, you will consult the well-being of the Christian community, and the quietness of all Italy, which is now in very great peril, and will remove all suspicions of a desire for domination; and finally you will achieve praise and immortal glory among all people. Moreover, as His Highness writes, should there be anything to complain of concerning the Duke aforesaid, besides the right judgment of the Supreme Pontiff, in which he is little likely to fail, we promise that we also will lend our assistance. May Your Excellency fare well.

Given at Rome, the 16th day of December, in the year of our Lord 1482. Under the signatures of our three seniors in order.

TO SIXTUS THE FOURTH, SUPREME PONTIFF.

WE have received the brief of Your Holiness with the reverence and devotion that were becoming, as we have always been accustomed to do. We have learned from it the causes which seem to have urged Your Holiness to desert our alliance and court peace and alliance with our common enemies. It exhorts us, moreover, with paternal affection and many most polite phrases, to enter into a peace with the other potentates of Italy, and next to abandon the war against Ferrara. Truly, Your Beatitude, we have already through our Ambassador said what we thought of the peace and alliance concluded with our common enemies. To repeat this at present does not appear to us to be worth while ; since such is the decision of Your Holiness, to whom all laws, divine and human, on account of your supreme wisdom and incomparable learning, are very well known. Would that they may so profit Your Holiness and the most Holy See. This, however, we must declare, namely, that that affair would be no slight trouble to us, did not our old custom towards all the former Holy Pontiffs, and especially Your Holiness, admonish us patiently to bear whatever it may please them to decree, to rescind, to do, and afterwards to hold as not having been done ; and had we not besides the hope that God Himself, the Supreme Judge of human affairs, as with just eyes He beholds these same things, will, with the arm of His might and justice, not desert us in this trouble,

especially since He has not deserted us in far more difficult times. Your exhortations to peace, most Blessed Father, full of goodness and wisdom, are worthy of the Pope and the common Parent of all. If, however, it becomes us, his children, to speak to their parent, with as much freedom as truth, they should be proffered in due season, that best test of human actions. For we shall not fear to declare this first of all ; that we and our predecessors have always so cultivated peace, that never have we had recourse to arms, unless provoked by the greatest injuries, or in order to keep faith with our allies, which we have always considered of more importance than any dangers of our own ; neither at this time have we regarded any one as an enemy, except the Ferrarese violator of the treaties. We shall not dwell upon his ingratitude for the innumerable benefits conferred by us, not only upon his ancestors, but likewise on himself, whom with our forces and our money we settled in that Duchy. And what return has he ever made us for such great deserts ? This may be due to the ignorance of a man who contemns all human rights. But what did he dare to do immediately after his entry into the Duchy ? What none of his predecessors had ever dared : to infringe our rights in Ferrara, to vex Venetian citizens, to abolish our magistracy, and finally to burst into the Venetian borders, and so into the Duchy itself. For five years and more was he exhorted with paternal words to repentance. If these things do not testify to our patience, not to say softness of disposition, and almost cowardice, there would be an end to

all fair judgment. Your Holiness is witness, to whom at the decline of the year we related these injuries. You may remember how irritating they seemed, how intolerable you thought them, and were roused even to vengeance in consequence ; but chiefly to attack with arms by land and sea the enemies of Your Holiness who were in league with the Duke of Ferrara ; with what fidelity therefore, with what zeal and magnanimity did we enter upon the war for your dignity and profit, and those of your Holy See. We omit to speak of the auxiliary forces of horse and foot, as many as were asked for, most liberally furnished for that purpose at our cost ; but most of all, that very strong fleet of almost eighty triremes and ships furnished with foot and horse must be mentioned, which, running along the entire coast from the Abruzzi to Brindisi, laid everything waste with fire and sword. Then the most noble victory gained by Robert Malatesta, our leader at Nettuno in the Campania over your enemies, and consecrated to your glory, is commemorated by eternal monuments in testimony of the same. What shall we say of our having preferred that Robert should leave Ferrara, a thing which has never been set down to our credit, and with all his troops, by a forced march, with the greatest possible speed be hurled against your enemy beyond Campania, as though we forgot that the forces of all Italy were united against us, and that Frederick of Urbino, that most renowned leader, had pitched his camp against our camp ? God favoured our pious ardour. The enemy was scattered and put to flight

by our leader. The city was freed from siege ; supplies were admitted. A triumph in honour of Your Holiness was celebrated, with a very long array of noble captives ; a more joyful and illustrious triumph the city of Rome has not seen for many ages past. But if your leaders had preferred to carry on the war seriously, rather than in jest, and to follow up the victory given them by God, the captive enemy would have come into your grasp, and the war would have been concluded with greater glory than ever fell to the lot of any Roman Pontiff. In the meanwhile, we a few days afterwards, by the too early and most unseasonable death of Robert, were deprived of our most renowned leader, to the very great loss of our dominion. We can by no means believe, Holy Father, that these new treaties have so deeply taken possession of your mind as to obliterate from it altogether these acts of devotion and kindness performed by us with so many expenses and dangers, and the grievous injuries of those by whom nothing was left untried against us. But how indulgent has been our disposition towards the Duke of Ferrara, when occasion offered, our letter to Your Holiness declares. We have always been prepared to receive him into our favour, provided only that he would restore to us our ancient rights and the dignities that he has wrested from us. Whether he assented or became more obstinate, who knows better than Your Holiness, whom both he and his allies have duped, while seeking by frivolous cavillings to cause delays, so that Your Holiness may hereafter think

it waste of time to communicate with us concerning the peace or pardon of any one? We had recourse, therefore, to war, which indeed the omnipotent and most just God, well aware of our justice, has everywhere followed up with the greatest advantages to us. But why is it necessary to say more concerning our good will and the rectitude of our intention, both because all these things have been managed by the hands of Your Holiness, and because they are now made clear, not only to Italians, but to foreign nations? But now, Holy Father, that you exhort us to peace, after coming nearly to the end of the war, we wish for the sake of Your Holiness that it might be possible for us to assent, with dignity and regard to the safety of our commonwealth, to the peace which at first we not only favoured, but very greatly desired. But it may be granted, for the sake of equity, of goodness, and finally of justice, not only to draw attention to what other persons wish, but to what may be agreeable to justice. For if before the outbreak of the war this efficacious invitation to peace had been put forth, everything would have been easy; it would have been little trouble, while the matter was fresh, to bring us to a forgetfulness of our injuries, were the doer of them penitent, which by the Divine law and the custom of our ancestors, and our own, we have always been able to erase from our thoughts. But after the expenditure of so great a mass of gold as Ferrara itself is not worth, however renowned it may be esteemed, after the loss of innumerable citizens, and those the most excellent, after holding a most obstinate enemy

besieged within his walls, to exhort us to peace only means to wrest victory itself from our hands, to yield up our dominion at the pleasure of our enemies, to the derision of the whole world, and to rouse an enemy dwelling in the heart of our State from madness to frenzy. And since Your Holiness makes mention of the Turks, truly when in that war we were harassed for twenty years, and bore upon our shoulders the entire weight of the Christian dangers, and when wearied by the duration of the war, and the very powerful forces and armies of the enemy, we sought for aid, never did we see Italy combine to assist us, from a desire for the peace of Italy. But now, so it pleases God, we are in a worse condition than that Hercules; while we are worn out, and encounter dangers in the war, others enjoy peace; now when the war is coming to an end, those same persons rush to arms, so that, in truth, we cannot but suspect that they have not come together through a love of peace, but have combined through being alarmed by our victory. We do not wish to say this of Your Holiness, who have always had both the honour of God and the peace and tranquillity of His flock so much at heart, that on that account you have done many great things with incredible ardour of mind and charity, and would do far more and greater, were it allowed to Your Holiness by those chiefly who now appear to counsel peace. Neither do we wish to say this of the most Reverend Lords the Cardinals, whose most holy intention and desire for the common peace of Christians is perspicuous

and most evident, nor of the most Serene Sovereigns of Castille, to whom in almost all ages we have been devoted with the purest love and sincere good will. It should be said, perhaps, rather with respect to some others whom neither our peace nor our war can satisfy; for when we are at peace, they use all arts to hurl us into wars, and those indeed the most perilous; when we are engaged in war, they cannot endure us to be the conquerors. What could be more unjust? If, however, this will not satisfy them, truly we trust that it will satisfy Your Holiness most fairly, most justly, and most piously, and that it will satisfy our most righteous Judge, our Lord Jesus Christ, whose holy faith and religion for more than six hundred years we have defended with our bodies and blood, whose most holy Vicars we have followed with pure veneration, fighting for them, and not esteeming princes or kings in comparison with the dignity of the Roman Church. Therefore, Blessed Father, with due reverence, we supplicate Your Holiness, if any favour is left to the deserving, if there be justice anywhere in human affairs, that you will suffer this Duke of Ferrara to experience the fortune that he has preferred. He wished for war, let him be satiated with war. He despised Your Beatitude, he contemned our offerings; let him gather the fruit that he has deserved through his obstinacy. We certainly shall not yield either in dignity or merits by comparison with the Duke of Ferrara. What has he ever done or conceived for the benefit of

Christendom? If we should say that we have done great things, we should be noted for arrogance; modesty has always been becoming to words, magnanimity to deeds. Let it therefore be left to your judgment, and that of the whole world. What Your Beatitude can hope for from this man we do not see; from us certainly you may hope something. If we have not done anything great, still we have at times done something, and with God's help we hope to do more. Why should Your Beatitude be displeased with our victory? We have convoked no council; we have planned no schism; we have not harassed you with war. Neither up to the present time have we learned to attack Christians in war with an infidel soldiery. Truly this benefit of the Church conferred upon us, bought by our blood, we shall both defend with our good offices, and strenuously take care that it may not seem to be perversely applied. It has been resolved, with your good pardon, Holy Father, and decreed to prosecute this war; for as the benediction of the most Holy Patriarch when once conferred upon his son, either could not, or certainly should not be torn away from him, so we cannot but hope for a happy issue to that war which the authority of the Supreme and Holy Pontiff roused, impelled, and provoked.

S. C.

vii. Jan., 1482.

TO THE SACRED COLLEGE OF THE REVEREND LORDS
CARDINALS.

WE have received your letter, most Reverend Fathers in Christ and Lords, in the Ferrara case, and although on account of that Prince's ingratitude towards us and the injuries done us, it is altogether most bitter, we have not been able to decline seeing and reading it with the reverence and observance that we owe and always have paid to that holy College. Truly it seems to represent the zeal and diligence of the best fathers of the Christian religion, who seek and desire those things which, unless other things are involved, have in themselves the greatest appearance of honesty and integrity. To what we allude the copy of our letter to the Supreme Pontiff herewith enclosed will abundantly show. Your College, however, is most worthy of praise and the highest commendation of all for undertaking the patronage of concord, and exhorting all men to peace, of which we do not deny that once even with this Hercules we were too desirous after the example of our forefathers, who never waged war unless provoked, and desired peace so far as it was in their power. Now, however, so many important things have intervened, through the folly of some and the malignity of others, that to a wonderful extent we truly grieve that we who have always been accustomed in all things to obey this most holy College, and to receive its

exhortations as precepts, cannot obey and comply with your very humane exhortations. For it is necessary that Princes should order things one by one according to the quality of affairs, times, and causes. How true this is, the omnipotent Lord of all things has taught us, who has fixed a limit for both virtues, so that however inclined to pity, He is accustomed to punish with scourges those obstinate in their sin. From the beginning we felt sorrow for this Duke of Ferrara, and deferred the punishment of his offence so long as there was any hope that he would repent and acknowledge the injury done us. His obstinacy conquered our patience of five years and more. After a weight of gold more precious than his Principality has been spent, and our citizens have been wasted by the sword and the marshes, peace is asked for truly at an unseasonable time. To peace he ought at the beginning to have given his acquiescence, best and most honourable Lords. Then when the Father, most merciful and most desirous of tranquillity, promised peace if the son would abstain from injuries, he added to his sin an obstinacy which God has shown to be so malignant and hateful to Him, that neither in this world nor the next would He esteem one so obstinate worthy of pity. You advise that we should avoid the suspicion of a lust for dominion. Wisely in truth and paternally. But no room will be left even for suspicion, if we have no longer been able to endure the wrong of five years, the violation of treaties and of immunities bought by our blood during more than three

hundred years. Let it be imputed to ambition when what is not just and reasonable is sought for in war, or when war is immediately commenced without laying the case before the other side and giving them a chance of repentance. But what ground for calumny can there be against us, who, as we have said, have demanded back what was anciently our own, have called him neighbour, have peacefully exhorted him? We put off all recourse to arms for so many years, and by our mildness we daily made him more obstinate in his purpose. Those have disturbed the peace of Italy whose habit it is to disturb it, and who have driven that wretched Prince, deceived by their promises, to prefer war to peace. Not we, however, who have omitted nothing by exhorting, advising, finally praying that he should prefer peace to war: we predicted, protested that he would pay the penalty of his folly. For the rest that concerns our course, Your Excellencies will obtain information from our letter to the Supreme Pontiff; from which, we think, there will be no one of so distorted or malignant a judgment that he can accuse us of being in the wrong, or of having omitted anything that becomes the most modest and temperate of men.

S. C.

vii. Jan., 1482.

Written out on the 11th day of the aforesaid.

C 2

SIXTUS THE FOURTH, POPE, TO HIS BELOVED SON, THE
NOBLE MAN, JOHN MOCENIGO, DOGE OF VENICE,
Health :

WE wrote some days ago, with paternal love, to Your Nobility the causes not less just than necessary which urged us, on behalf of the safety of all Italy and of the Christian commonwealth, to arrange a peace, exhorting that you should accept the same, and withdraw from the war against Ferràra, which is our city, and that of the Roman Church, and that you should restore the places you had occupied ; and we treated with you about this in the most courteous terms, not using even one word that could offend either yourself or your honour. But you sent us a letter in reply written by you in terms far different from what we hoped that we should read, painting the Ferrarese war with many lying colours, and imputing to us motives which never existed, and never entered into our mind ; and this has therefore affected us with trouble and the greatest grief, for it has shown that your mind and soul are averse to that peace and alliance which we had resolved to make among the States of Italy, and that you vehemently abhor them. We had hoped indeed to be able as often as we might wish to judge of you exactly as though you were the most obedient of our sons ; and thus when we had persuaded the other princes or potentates of Italy to arrange a peace and alliance, we appeared to have so gained all our desires, that no difficulty or trouble remained

to hinder the attainment of so renowned an object. But we have been deceived. Therefore we shall answer in the simple truth of facts, which cannot be evaded although it may be veiled, and which needs no artful disguise of words. You not only do not approve of our reasons for the peace undertaken by us, but you even object that we have abandoned our treaty with you, whereas it is clearer than day that it was abandoned by you and observed by us, who not only have observed those things which are contained in it, but for your sake have been brought into the utmost danger. Between us nothing else was agreed to except for the common defence of our States, nor could any one nor dared any one take any fresh step in the way of action. Letters Apostolic having been issued by the advice of our venerable brethren on behalf of peace and the welfare of the faith, with the most grave censures attached prohibiting it, no fresh step has been attempted by us, neither has any occasion been ever given nor pretended for waging war. We who with the best right might punish our subjects when grievously offending, have preferred, in order that no occasion might be given for disturbing the peace, to forget all injuries and to spare them. No potentate in Italy has taken any fresh step against you. You first without our knowledge took fresh steps by erecting ramparts and fortifications, which you said you had constructed within your own boundaries; but the Duke of Ferrara complained that you had made them to almost the fifth milestone within his boundaries. Neither

could we be persuaded that you had done this to scorn us and to mock the Apostolic penalties, while the treaty between us remained still in force, because we believed that you were the defender of our affairs and of our honour and that of the Holy See ; not their assailant. As soon, therefore, as we knew of this innovation committed by you, we wrote to you and earnestly exhorted you to a composition, of which innovation had we previously known we certainly should have written to you before. We were the more courteous to you, however, in that matter because you answered that you had remained within the limits of your own boundaries, and that you would receive the Duke of Ferrara like a son, provided only that he were willing to observe the agreements which his ancestors observed ; and you persuaded us that your mind was not in any respect set upon war or the occupation of Ferrara, but on the defence of your own borders and rights. Wherefore since it could not be denied that an innovation had been made by the erection of fortifications during the peace of all Italy, although urged to the exaction of the penalties contained in the Letters Apostolic, still desiring with paternal charity to soften discords, and rather to extinguish fire than increase it, we exhorted the Duke himself to the observance of those agreements that his ancestors had made. He wrote back that he had made you an offer of observing those same agreements. But when you had signified to us that he had not offered in that manner, in order that nothing might be wanting to complete the composition to be made between

us, we sent the form of words in writing, which the Duke himself said that he had observed ; this, however, you denied, and therefore the ambassadors of the Duke himself and his confederates offered to make a promise under the same form of words in our consistory ; and they produced a letter from the whole League, in which it referred all controversies of this kind to us and our sacred College, promising that it would exactly fulfil whatever may be decided by us. But you, though often asked by us to do the same thing, which certainly in all reason, and especially on account of the treaty between us, you ought to have done, were unwilling to do so, whether through a distrust and contempt of reason and justice, or of ourselves, we know not. You affirmed that in the affairs of Ferrara you recognized no superior, which although it was plainly against honesty, against law and the decrees of the holy fathers, against our treaty, and in contempt of us and to the diminution of our authority and jurisdiction, still because you had persuaded us that no war, but peace would follow the same, we tolerated all things, and as far as we could always advised you and asked you to renew the friendship which the Duke himself offered. For these reasons we cannot sufficiently wonder that you have deliberately forgotten those things which we had previously written to you, and which we had treated about often and long with your ambassador, at which time indeed neither was there any money spent, nor had citizens died, nor was an enemy besieged, or even declared. But you answer

that our admonitions were applied not in the proper time, the best judge of human actions, but at the end of the war, after so much expense, after the death of many citizens, after the enemy had been besieged. We certainly are ignorant what new sort of calumny this is that has been invented, when you say that you had wished for peace even from the beginning, to which had we exhorted you, we should easily have obtained anything from you. This excuse can by no means be received, for that we were cheated no one will dare deny, who knows the sequel, from which your intention towards us before the war, and your pre-arranged plan of carrying on the war in Ferrara, are clearer than day. And if you wish to truly estimate what has been done by us, you will see indeed that in so far as concerned concord and the observance of our treaty, we both satisfied you by letter, and often and long treated with your ambassador; and, moreover, omitted nothing that we thought would make for your honour and the quiet of Italy. We were unwilling to proceed to the censure of a Bull, because you gave a certain hope of concord and no prospect of making war. In which hope while we rested, and nevertheless exhorted you to send us your claims in legal form, you against justice, in despite of us whom you knew to have a horror of war, altogether without our knowledge, advanced impious arms in open war against Ferrara. And that you may the more clearly perceive our intentions towards you and the observance of our treaty, see what we have suffered through you.

The Duke of Calabria asked us for a permission of transit to defend his kinsman, his sister, and nephews, and declared that should we refuse he would direct his arms against us. It was in our power to give him a transit through our cities and territories while advancing to repel aggression ; it was in our power to do this without violating our treaty, which was entered upon only for the defence of our own States ; it was in our power to do so with the best right and with God's assistance, for the peace of Italy disturbed by you. We did not do so, however, because your ambassador persuaded us that peace would be quickly restored, and that if any trouble to us should anywhere arise, you would at once send hither a most powerful fleet into Apulia and an army for our defence, which would draw off all those enemies as quickly as possible. Being persuaded that you would do this, we altogether refused the transit, that you might incline the Duke to peace, not that you might arouse a war. No agreement, however, nay, on the contrary, a most bitter war suddenly sprang up. The same Duke advanced in arms into the Roman territory, took many settled towns before our eyes, pitched his camp in the suburbs of Rome, intercepted supplies both by land and sea, set on fire all Latium, and whatever intervening land there was, to the very walls. Now was there sedition both abroad and at home. Many of the Roman nobles had fallen away from us, all things seemed about to go to ruin, and we were in danger even of our life, for this sole reason, because we were said to favour you. But if we

had then wished to desert you, certainly nothing would have been contrived or done against us ; and when by letter and through your ambassador we asked for the auxiliaries due to us from you in accordance with our treaty, and promised to us, you postponed it to a distant day, in order that we might consent to the uttermost details of your plan for the storming of Ferrara. Then, not through your devotion and zeal on our account, but in order that the war against Ferrara should not be discontinued, after so many misfortunes, you sent a fleet, although a very weak one, which, only poorly furnished in comparison with your **promise**, drew off, perhaps, one man. Rather it increased the hostile army further. And you immediately withdrew the self-same fleet into Ferrara, so **that** even from this any one may clearly see that it had been fitted out for the **Ferrarese** war, not for our defence. Therefore, when we had no supports from a fleet of that kind, we hoped that you who, according to treaty, were bound to maintain an army of 8,000 horse and 5,000 foot for the common defence of the States, would send Robert Malatesta to us, with his horsemen, whom we had previously earnestly asked from you, situated as we were among so many calamities. He had sat down not before Ferrara, but before Bagnacavallo. Letters were exchanged on both sides. Day by day we were more fiercely harassed. At length we sent our Ambassador that with our words he might set forth in what and how great dangers we were placed, and might beg for Robert with his soldiers. You delayed many days

in your answer. At length you refused. Then fearing lest by our means the war against Ferrara might be discontinued, and at the same time to avoid a great stain on your reputation, after the loss of Terracina, of Civitacastellana, of Benevento, most noble cities of the Holy Roman Church, after so many soldiers of our own who were waiting in the city itself for the said Robert had been consumed by fever and plague, you sent Robert without any soldiers, and afterwards soldiers without any pay; when in recruiting our army and distributing money to Robert's troops no small amount of gold was consumed, and the Apostolic treasury was so exhausted that unless God Himself had inspired us with the thought, that our troops might suddenly attack the enemy's army, we should now have no Rome in existence. The just God, therefore, gave us the victory, with which, however, we have been so illiberally reproached as though it were by your generalship and the help of your soldiers we had obtained it, not by the will of God. For if our officers had listened to the counsel of your Ambassador and Provveditore in our army, as they cried out that we were by no means to engage, the whole victory would have slipped from our hands, and never, or only too late, have fallen to us. We routed in the Roman territory the army of those with whose support we also at another time routed yours, Immortal God being truly the author of both victories. To Him alone we owe all things. Neither have you never waged war against ourselves, you who boast that you have always favoured our side; and you endeavoured not

only by colleges, letters, and your ambassadors, but in every way to oust us from our See. All those things, however, we had forgotten in the interests of peace. But when, beside the victory itself, it appeared to us very necessary to punish our subjects on account of their recent rebellion, and therefore we had need of those same soldiers of yours, they by command of your officers demanded a safe conduct, and neither by money nor favour could they be kept for many days ; through whose departure, hastened by your officers, all our desire to punish those others was frustrated, and the loss of Cistern followed, and at Cavi the breaking up of our army took place. The Duke of Calabria with his army having retired into the province of Campania, harassed the city itself with various incursions. Of all which things we informed you through your Ambassador and our letter, and set forth what need there then was of money and soldiers. But when we were overwhelmed in such great difficulties of affairs and such great danger of our life, not one soldier nor one half-penny were you willing to grant us according to treaty. Nay, rather you openly declared to us that you could not supply us with any further subsidy or assistance, and while we were thus placed and beset by so many perils on your account, you used all your diligence, and every endeavour, and finally all your force, not for the safety of your own borders, but for the destruction of Ferrara our city, and a renowned city of the Roman Church. Neither our treaty, nor equity, nor religion demands this, since the treaty was concluded for

the common defence of the States. You, however, will now turn your arms against us with danger to our remaining possessions, and will then prove to us either that you kept the treaty or did not leave it, or that you had not alienated yourself from us and the Roman Church. What assistance have you rendered to us according to the treaty, if you have waged so impious a war, not against our enemies, but against us? We certainly were not any longer united with you, when you, by force and arms pillaging our possessions of your own accord and design, separated yourself from us. When therefore we were alone, and you had so openly violated our treaty, and had hostilely besieged our city, what, I say, for our defence, for the preservation of the authority of the Apostolic See, for the recovery of the places occupied by you, and for justice itself, what, I say, did it behove us to do in accordance with the dignity of the Roman Church? Truly that which we have done, namely, to enter into peace with those who love the peace of Italy, and who resolved with us for the defence and recovery of the same things to lay out all their zeal and resources. Therefore it does not become you to complain of the peace made, if you refer even to those things, which are in accordance with justice, nor that victory itself in nowise moves us, who best of all know that it was given to us by the one best God that we might effect this very thing upon which we are now bestowing our care. We have not conquered in order that we might always carry on war, but that we might obtain a public

peace, for the sake of which Divine Providence has brought us victory. Our intention, therefore, has been most honest. Such was not yours, as we now to the fullest extent understand. Whatever kindness you did us, you certainly did not for the sake of religion, nor for our sake, but that you might claim for yourself the Government of Ferrara, for which, as your letter shows, you had long been most greedily watching. It was not our design to wrest from their just lords what belonged to them, nor finally to sow the seeds of war after war ; but it was this which it now is, to conclude a public peace for Italy, and thus consult the interests of our Christian religion for whose propagation, or at least defence, we have been set over it by Immortal God. This very thing has been our constant study, and we now so study it that we are intensely angry with you for opposing us. But as for your supposing that our exhorting you to peace is nothing else now than to wrest victory out of your hands, and at the same time to expose you to the will of your enemies, for the derision of the whole world, we cannot sufficiently wonder that you have been led into such an error, in which, with paternal charity as we have always done, we advise you to direct your mind more accurately to all those things from a sense of religion, and not allow a lust for rule to draw you aside from considering that what you think derision we regard as the highest wisdom and the highest justice ; for, if you have spent a vast amount of money in these wars, have heard of the deaths

of so many of your citizens, and have held victory itself in your hands, the greater honour and praise will be yours, if leaving aside all these, you embrace the common peace. On the contrary, however, if you pursue this war, as you affirm has been decreed and resolved upon by you, know that you are proclaiming war against the Immortal God like the giants, and that you will expose yourself to derision and infamy, since you will have to deal with Christ Jesus our God and His Holy Church, for whose honour and the defence of Ferrara we shall be aiding with all our powers divine and human. You will have to deal likewise with the other potentates of Italy, who will not suffer the Church of God and Italy herself to be weakened by you. You have an unjust cause, an unlawful war, you fight against God and men. We, on the contrary, maintain justice. Our cause is that of Christ, whose place we, however unworthy, hold upon earth. You have roused up all Italy into a flame against you. Therefore, unless you desist from so great a crime and restore the places you have occupied, you will become an object of derision and even hatred to all Christians, nay, even to God Himself, for all will say truly that you are the occupier of another's property rather than the defender of your own. Remember, beloved son, that Lucifer had a sublimity, a dignity, and an excellency beyond all the angels before his fall, but when elated with pride he wished to be exalted, he was humiliated and thrust down even into the depth of the abyss. Call to mind the word of our Saviour, "It is

hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Remember the Letters Apostolic by which before Easter those are expressly excommunicated, interdicted, and anathematized who are striving to occupy our city of Ferrara. See for yourself whether you have subjected yourself to these penalties, and cease to calumniate us concerning a treaty deserted or a licence granted. No one knows these things better than you. You never moved in this war with our permission and consent, or, as you assert, with our knowledge, or at our persuasion, or at our instigation; nay, rather against our judgment and desire, and without our knowledge. Neither can it enter into the mind of any man that we wished to yield up the property of the Roman Church to be pillaged by your arms. Do not boastingly say that you hold victory in your hands; for Immortal God alone gives this and takes it away, whose cause is concerned. From which it appears that it may easily happen that you who seem to have conquered may in a short time be seen to have lost, and may be compelled to retrace your steps as far as you have advanced. But if you prosecute this war, doubt not that a joyful victory with Christ and His Spouse will quickly come to us. Wherefore, beloved son, again and again we exhort, require, and admonish you in the Lord that you lay aside these vain thoughts, restrain unbridled desires, withdraw your arms, set Ferrara free, restore the castles which you have captured, leave every one in tranquil possession of what is his own, and embrace the peace of

Italy. And thus you may consult your own welfare and the tranquillity of the whole of Italy. Otherwise we shall not any further conceal that we shall proceed against you with spiritual and temporal arms, as shall to us seem expedient, and as justice shall persuade. For that lust of domination in you is not to be borne; it is too inhuman, too irreligious, and too unlike a Christian, especially when it is exhibited towards Christ and His Vicar. We therefore wish for public peace in Italy, that we may at the same time guard against the injuries of wars, and at the same time restore all men to tranquillity, and with the united strength of the Christian Commonweal take counsel against our most fierce enemies.

Given at Rome in MCCCCLXXXII, XVII Cal. Martii.

COPY OF A LETTER FROM THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS
VENETIAN REPUBLIC TO OUR MOST HOLY LORD
SIXTUS IV., BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE PONTIFF.

WE have steadfastly read and modestly what Your Holiness advises and counsels in your letter. Whatever you have done, after violating the terms of our treaty, and neglecting both our ancient and recent services to the Apostolic See, we submit to with a cheerful mind. If the power of loosing and binding is granted to you, even in a matter of this kind, it is sufficient for us that it has happened through no fault of our own, that you deserted us who with our money, our army and fleet routed that viper

whom you have lately received into your bosom, which then assailed you ; neither have we been wanting to you in our resources, in order that we might defend you and the Apostolic See, to our own great inconvenience and danger. You cannot charge us with wiles, perfidy, or collusion, all which if (as we expect) you will discover in your reconciled friends, you will not think that you are experiencing anything new, who of your own accord have fallen into those snares out of which you had escaped. So far as we are concerned, if you think it is right for you, since you are God's Vicegerent on earth, that the obligations of a solemn treaty and peace should be violated, we ask you that, although you may be unwilling, we may be able to defend the Empire, partly acquired by our ancestors and partly by ourselves, with due regard to the dignity of our Republic. With us nothing has been more highly valued than peace, which has always cherished and increased our liberty, no less than war ; neither have our ancestors, nor have we ever entered upon a war, except in order that by that means we might lay the foundations of peace. Lately we have fought not with the desire of extending our rule, but for the defence of our liberty, with yourself for our leader and adviser ; in which thing if you desert us, neglecting the obligation of the peace agreed upon between us, we do not see on what grounds you advise us to peace, who now by a feigned asseveration disturb the obligations of peace. Since you wish this to be granted to Your Holiness, we accept it with a contented

mind, provided only that you do not deny that our labours, our resources, and the lives of our citizens, even against your will, were due to our liberty and our dignity. But finally, on account of our respect for Your Holiness which we have observed without blemish, even when deserted by you, we praise the counsel for a peace, in which neither inconstancy, nor deceit, nor perfidy should be employed, which should not impair the dignity of our Republic, which finally, we should grant rather than accept. Most of all, we call our best God to witness in that daily prayer—grant us Thy peace in our days, and repel all iniquity from Thy Church—we commend ourselves and the Apostolic See, and the Church delivered to your keeping, to Your Holiness; that no tumults may spring up among the faithful, and that no occasion may be given to the Barbarians for exercising their rage against Christians, and for occupying Italy during this your Pontificate. All which things we see close at hand, and as far as we are concerned, and shall bear them with the less uneasiness, as from these causes we shall be more readily permitted to defend the constitution of our Republic. May the great and omnipotent God grant to Your Holiness by word and example to benefit those over whom you are set, and dispose of all things according to His direction. We who have been occupied now for so many years in defence of the Christian Faith, and accustomed to the most troublesome wars, have not hesitated to devote our resources, both public and private; and we shall in future do

the same, all the more strenuously, as the matter will be more peculiar to ourselves ; we shall repel force by force, we shall overthrow wealth with wealth, and we shall oppose crime to crime, if it cannot otherwise be done. You may promise so much from us to the Apostolic See, as slavery itself, and as much as it shall be lawful to perform, with due regard to the dignity of the Venetian Senate.

Here end the six most elegant Epistles ; of which three were written by the Supreme Pontiff Sixtus the Fourth and the Sacred College of Cardinals to the most Illustrious Doge of Venice, John Mocenigo, and as many by the aforesaid Doge to the aforesaid Pope and Cardinals, on the subject of the Ferrarese War ; printed by William Caxton, and diligently revised by Peter Carmelianus, Poet Laureate, in Westminster.

If eloquence you love these letters buy,
Which e'en with Marcus Cicero may vie ;
Those writings ought to please the cultured mind
In which a copious flow of wit we find.*

* Here follows the "Interpretacio magnarum litterarum punctuatarum, parvarumque" ; being an explanation of the contractions made use of in the Latin text.

THE END.



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